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<p>This thesis studies the basic income grant proposal in Namibia. The proposal suggests a monthly grant of N\$100 (approximately 10€) to all those Namibian citizens who do not receive the state pension. This thesis concentrates on the Basic Income Grant (BIG) Coalition and on its work. The formation and transformation of the coalition during the time period between 2003 and 2009 is analyzed with the help of data collected during two field work periods in 2008 and 2009. The data includes interviews, newspaper articles, observations and other background material. The analysis of this material is mainly conducted from organizational viewpoint. The final part of the thesis applies the results to the theory of Mosse, whose propositions about policy and practice will be discussed in relation to the basic income grant pilot project.</p> <p>The thesis argues that social legitimacy has been a vital resource for the work of the BIG Coalition and it has sought for it in various ways. The concept of social legitimacy originates from the resource dependence perspective of Pfeffer and Salancik, who propose that organizations are dependent on their environments, and on the resources provided by the surrounding environment. This thesis studies the concept of social legitimacy in the context of resource dependence theory. Social legitimacy is analyzed in the relations between the coalition and its environment, in the formation of the coalition, in the responses towards criticism, and finally in relation to the propositions concerning policy and practice. The work of the coalition in the pilot project will be analyzed through the propositions of Mosse concerning policy and practice.</p> <p>The results will describe and analyze key events in the formation of the BIG Coalition from the South African proposal until the end of the basic income pilot project. This BIG pilot project conducted in 2008-2009 is one of the most well-known activities of the coalition. The clashes between the coalition and its environment will be analyzed through four case studies. It will be shown that the project has been conducted in order to gain more legitimacy to the basic income grant proposal. The conclusion questions the legitimacy of the BIG Coalition as a research and development organization, and requests for more transparent research on the basic income proposal in Namibia.</p>		
Avainsanat – Nyckelord – Keywords development research, basic income, Namibia, non-governmental organizations		



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Tiivistelmä – Referat – Abstract <p>Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma keskittyy perustulo-ehdotukseen Namibiassa. Ehdotukseen sisältyy N\$100 (n.10€) kuukausittainen tuki kaikille niille namibialaisille, jotka eivät saa valtioneläkettä. Näkökulmana on namibialainen Perustulokoalitiio ja sen työ. Koalition muodostumista ja muutosta vuosien 2003 ja 2009 välisenä aikana analysoidaan kahden vuosina 2008 ja 2009 toteutetun kenttätutkimuksen aikana kootun materiaalin avulla. Tämä aineisto koostuu haastatteluista, sanomalehtiartikkeleista, havainnoista ja muusta taustamateriaalista. Aineiston analyysi on toteutettu pääosin organisaatioteoreettisesta näkökulmasta. Tutkielman viimeinen osa soveltaa tuloksia Mossen teoriaan, jonka policy ja käytäntö - ehdotuksista keskustellaan suhteessa perustuloprojektiin.</p> <p>Tutkielmassa väitetään, että sosiaalinen legitimitetti on ollut Perustulokoalitiolle elintärkeä resurssi ja se onkin tavoitellut sitä monin tavoin. Sosiaalisen legitimitetin käsitteen alkuperä on Pfefferin ja Salancikin resurssiriippuvuusteoriassa, jossa ehdotetaan, että organisaatiot ovat riippuvaisia ympäristöstään ja niiden tarjoamista resursseista. Tässä työssä tutkitaan sosiaalisen legitimitetin käsitettä resurssiriippuvuusteorian yhteydessä. Sosiaalista legitimitettiä analysoidaan koalition ja sen ympäristön välillä, koalition muodostuksessa, sen reaktioissa kritiikkiä kohtaan, ja lopuksi suhteessa ehdotuksiin, jotka liittyvät politiikkaan ja käytäntöön.</p> <p>Tulokset kuvailevat ja analysoivat Perustulokoalition muodostumisen tärkeimpiä tapahtumia Etelä-Afrikan ehdotuksesta perustulon pilottiprojektin loppuun saakka. Tämä perustuloprojekti toteutettiin vuosina 2008 ja 2009 ja se on yksi koalition parhaiten tunnetuista toimista. Koalition ja ympäristön välisiä yhteentörmäyksiä analysoidaan neljän tapauksen avulla. Esitetään, että projekti on toteutettu, jotta perustuloehdotus saisi lisää kannatusta. Yhteenvedossa Perustulokoalition legitimitetti tutkimus- ja kehitysorganisaationa kyseenalaistetaan, ja peräänkuulutetaan läpinäkyvämpää tutkimusta perustuloehdotuksesta Namibiassa.</p>		
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Basic Income Grant in Namibia

Viewpoint on the Proposal and on the Work of the BIG Coalition

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Abbreviations

ANC – African National Congress

AU – African Union

BIG – Basic Income Grant

CAFO – Church Alliance for Orphans

CCN – Council of Churches in Namibia

CoD – Congress of Democrats

COSATU – Congress of South African Trade Unions

DfSD – Desk for Social Development

ELCIN – Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia

ELCRN – Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia

EPRI – Economic Policy Research Institute

FFF – Forum for the Future

IPPR – Institute for Public Policy Research

LAC – Legal Assistance Centre

LaRRI – Labour Resource and Research Institute

LWF – Lutheran World Federation

NANASO – Namibia Network of AIDS Service Organizations

NANGOF – Namibian NGO Forum

NAPPA – Namibia Planned Parenthood Association

NBC – Namibian Broadcasting Corporation

NEPRU – Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit

NHAG – Namibia Housing Action Group

NPA – Namibia Paralegal Association

NUNW – National Union of Namibian Workers

NYC – National Youth Council

P.E.A.C.E Centre – People's Education, Assistance and Counseling for Empowerment

RDP – Rally for Democracy and Progress

SWAPO – South-West African People's Organization

UWC – The University of Western Cape

WAD – Women's Action for Development

1. Introduction

Poverty is wrong. A Basic Income Guarantee would put an end to poverty. It would provide economic security to everyone, like an insurance policy, for you, me, Uncle Charlie, Aunt Jane. It gives all of us the assurance that, no matter what happens, we won't starve. Loss of a job, or sickness, won't put a family onto the street.

Sheahen (2006: 3).

The quote above, borrowed from an interview of a United States -based basic income researcher Allan Sheahen, sets the fundamental motivation for many basic income activists. The underlying idea is very simple: “poverty is wrong” and the provision of basic income is the ultimate solution to this problem. Not surprisingly, this idea is attractive to many development researchers due to its somewhat unique claim of providing a key solution to the alleviation of poverty.

This promise caught my attention during my stay in Namibia from January to June 2008. During that time, the Namibian Basic Income Grant (BIG) Coalition made headlines as the BIG pilot project had recently been launched, and the hopes for it succeeding were high. I was curious to find out more about this project and decided to concentrate on the issue in my master's thesis. At the very beginning, I was first and foremost interested in the results of the pilot project. However, as I began to conduct the interviews, it became clear that the proposal and the work of the BIG Coalition included a number of aspects which were not discussed in public. Therefore, I decided to leave the original idea aside, and began to search for information concerning the history and development of the BIG proposal in southern Africa.

The basic income proposal has attracted supporters from different backgrounds, and these supporters have formed various networks and organizations¹. In South Africa a number of organizations formed a coalition supporting the basic income grant proposal, and thereafter a similar coalition was formed in Namibia. The Namibian Basic Income Grant (BIG) Coalition has actively lobbied for the grant and organized a pilot project to gain more support for its views.

This thesis takes a closer look to the work of the Namibian BIG Coalition. The BIG proposal in South Africa and its influence on the formation of the Namibian Coalition

will be discussed. The critical events in the relations with the surrounding environment will be scrutinized. I will argue that the response of the Coalition to the criticism reveals a lack of social legitimacy in relation to its environment. Due to understandable reasons, a number of people feel strongly attached to the idea of BIG. This work will not comment on the results of the Basic Income Grant experiment in Omitara/Otjivero village of Namibia. It is neither an attack for or against the idea of universal basic income. Instead, the challenges faced by the BIG Coalition will be addressed, drawing conclusions from evidence based on several discussions, newspaper articles, observations, and theoretical background studying organizations and development projects.

The introduction to this thesis provides the background information of Namibia. Thereafter, the concept of basic income will be discussed. The second part of the thesis presents the theoretical background of the research, and finally draws together the research question. The third part presents the methodological approach and data analysis. The results of this research are presented in four chapters, each providing certain perspective to the actions of the BIG Coalition; in the fourth chapter, the BIG Coalition is analyzed from the organizational viewpoint, and the stakeholders as well as the environment of the coalition are scrutinized; the fifth chapter analyzes the background of the Namibian BIG proposal and the critical occurrences in the formation of the coalition; the sixth chapter of the thesis analyzes the clashes between the BIG Coalition and its environment from the viewpoint of social legitimacy; and finally, these three parts are concluded in the seventh chapter, where the formation and the actions of the BIG Coalition are analyzed in the context of policy and practice. The final chapter provides an overview of the research with concluding remarks and makes policy recommendations and proposes further research topics.

1.1 Background of the Country

The Republic of Namibia is located in south-western part of Africa. The western part of the country faces South Atlantic Ocean, and the neighboring countries include South Africa in the south, Botswana in the east and Angola in the north. The country is also connected to Zambia and Zimbabwe via Caprivi Strip in the north-eastern part of the

country. Namibia gained independence from South Africa in 1990 and Germany occupied the area during the years 1886-1915 (BBC 2009a). The population of the country is roughly two million and the total area of the vast country is 824,292 square kilometers (BBC 2009b). The HDI² rank of the country in 2007 was 128 out of 182 countries (UNDP 2009a). The GDP per capita was US\$ 5,155, rating the country 105 out of 181 countries (2009a).

Population	2 200 000 (2008 estimate)
Languages spoken at home:	
(Percentage of Households)	
Oshiwambo	48 %
Nama/Damara	11 %
Afrikaans	11 %
Kavango (Rukwangali)	10 %
Otjiherero	8 %
People living with HIV/AIDS	
Aged 15-49	19,9% (2006)
Life expectancy at birth	51,6 years (2005)
People living with below US\$1 a day	34,90 %
People living with below US\$2 a day	55,80 %
Population density	
Persons per km ²	2,1
Religion	
Christian	80-90%
Literacy Rate	
People aged over 15	85% (2005)
Unemployment rate	36,7% (2004)

*Table 1: Namibia in a Nutshell
(Hopwood 2008: 3,5)*

Namibia gained independence in 1990 after a long struggle. The Swapo Party of Namibia, originating from the liberation movement South West Africa People's Organization has been in power continuously after the independence, and the elections of 2009 did not change the situation. The official National Assembly Election Results of 2009 announced by the Electoral Commission of Namibia indicated 74,29% of support to Swapo Party, leaving the new opposition party Rally for Democracy and Progress (RDP) second with 11,16% of the votes. The presidential candidate of Swapo and the current president of the country, Hifikepunye Pohamba, received an even larger portion

of the votes (75,25%) while the presidential candidate of RDP, Hidipo Hamutenya received 10,91% of the votes. The observer mission of African Union (AU) declared its satisfaction with the elections, although referring to certain minor challenges. Civil society organizations set up observation missions, and did not report severe irregularities. However, the opposition parties disputed the results of the election. (Melber 2010.)

Poverty and Inequality in Namibia

The Namibia Household Income and Expenditure Survey (NHIES) conducted by the Central Bureau of Statistics during the years 2003/2004, provides some key figures providing information of Namibia (CBS 2006: 2). According to the report, “[o]nly 10 per cent of the households with the highest income account for nearly half the total income, whereas 90 per cent stand for the other half” (2006: 41). In addition to this, the Gini³ coefficient for the country is 0,6 – indicating a highly unequal distribution of income (2006: 41). This ranks Namibia as one of the most unequal countries in the world (2006: 40). Furthermore, using the food consumption ratio as one measure of poverty, “the results show that there are systematic differences between different groups of households. The 5 per cent of households with the lowest income have a food consumption ratio between 80 and 100 per cent, whereas the 2 per cent of households with the highest income have a food consumption ratio of less than 40 per cent” (2006: 41). In addition to this, the country is affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. It is estimated that 15% of adults aged 15-49 carry the virus (UNAIDS 2008). The unemployment rate is also high – according to the Namibia Labour Force Survey in 2008, 51,2% of Namibians are unemployed (Duddy 2010).

The stark contrast between rich and poor is clearly visible for example in the capital city Windhoek. Modern shopping-centers offer various services for people from upper- and middle-class residential areas – for those who drive their four-wheel drives on Fridays to their holiday apartments to the coast, or to their farms in the countryside. These residents build their houses behind high electric fences and rarely leave the house without their car. Residential areas such as Eros, Avis, Hochland Park and Klein Windhoek are full of these houses. On the northern side of the centre of Windhoek, one

finds one of the poorest residential area of the city: Katutura. The word means “a place where we don’t want to live” and originates from the forced removal of 1961, where black residents were moved from the “Old Location” to Katutura. Currently the central area of Katutura has transformed into a middle-class residential area, but moving further away from the city centre, the informal settlement areas can be found. Although even these areas are relatively safe during daytime, most of the streets have names, and the informal houses have electricity, the contrast between these areas and the before-mentioned rich ones is enormous.

Background of the BIG Proposal in Namibia

The Namibian BIG Coalition was formed in 2005 to lobby for the implementation of the basic income grant in the country. According to them, basic income grant is the key element in the solution of the problems caused by unemployment and poverty. In order to gain more support for the proposal, the coalition conducted an experiment in a small Namibian village called Omitara, some hundred kilometers east from the capital city Windhoek. Each inhabitant of the village received a monthly payment of N\$100 regardless of the age or employment level of the beneficiary (an exception to this were pensioners, who did not receive the grant as they are eligible for the government-funded old-age pension). The experiment began in January 2008, and continued until the end of 2009. The official hope of the coalition was that the BIG would have been introduced on a national level in Namibia after the elections of 2009, and after the pilot project experiment. The coalition also has international stakeholders as it has international donors, and the origins of the Namibian BIG Coalition are in South Africa. Before continuing the introduction to the theoretical background of the thesis, I will discuss the concept of basic income in more detail.

1.2 The Concept of Basic Income and the History of the Proposal

According to John Cunliffe and Guido Erreygers, the first ideas concerning the concept of basic income can be traced to Fourierist tradition⁴. Joseph Charlier discussed unconditional basic income in his work *Solution du Problème Social* in 1848. He presented the idea of an unconditional grant, which would be paid to every individual in

the society without means-testing. Furthermore, it was supposed to provide certain level of subsistence. The role of Charlier is discussed in the work of John Cunliffe and Guido Erreygers. (2001.)

In the United States, James Tobin suggested a basic income in 1967, and presidential candidate George McGovern supported the idea during his campaign in 1972. However, Van Parijs argues that the concept of basic income has gained more support in European countries later on in 1970s in countries he determines as being “‘left-liberal’ (in the European sense)”. (Van Parijs 2000.)⁵

Philippe Van Parijs and Stuart White build their argument concerning basic income around Difference Principle of John Rawls. The base for Difference Principle lies in the Rawls's definition of fair equality of opportunity. His statement of justice includes two principles: “First: each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive scheme of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar scheme of liberties for others” (Rawls 1972: 53). Secondly: “Social and economic inequalities are to be arranged so that they are both (a) to the greatest expected benefit of the least advantaged and (b) attached to offices and positions open to all under conditions of fair equality of opportunity” (1972: 72). This second part can be seen as a simplified Difference Principle (ibid.).⁶ The Difference Principle can be considered as a justification for basic income, at least the arguments from the Basic Income Grant Coalition seem to follow this line of deduction.

According to Van Parijs, a liberal theory of justice is “one that is truly committed to an equal concern for all and to nondiscrimination among conceptions of the good life” (1991: 102). He claims that the idea of BIG actually is not unfair towards some, hard-working, people (often the counter-argument for the idea). To clarify the argument, he points out that he has approved “*real-libertarian*” definition as the concept of social justice, which means, the “*real freedom*” of individuals should be in “*maximin*”⁷. This means that the priority should be given to the ones who have “the least amount of real freedom” (1991: 103). He uses the Difference Principle by Rawls described above as a starting point “that is, the requirement that socioeconomic advantages - - should be maximinned, that is, distributed in such a way that the least advantaged end up with at least as many such advantages as the least advantaged would end up with under any alternative arrangement” (1991: 104). But the Difference Principle, according to Van

Parijs is a bit loose, although he believes the Principle recommends “- - that one should introduce a wealth-distributing, power-conferring, self-respect-preserving unconditional basic income, indeed, that one should introduce such an income at the highest sustainable level,” (1991: 105) and therefore Van Parijs develops the idea further concentrating on the concept of Ronald Dworking, equality of external resources (1991).⁸ He clarifies the concepts of external resources and the determination of their value. Van Parijs clearly supports the idea of a society which is willing to redistribute, and organize itself in such a way that it is possible to pay basic income.

1.3 The Definition of Basic Income

There are several different, but closely linked definitions for the words basic income, and the term is also used in slightly different forms. In order to understand the differences between the definitions, I will shortly present some of them here. According to Stuart White (1997), the “idea of unconditional income” has three requirements. These are: the income is paid “(a) on an individual basis, (b) irrespective of income from other sources, and (c) without regard to past or present work performance or willingness to accept a job if offered” (1997: 312). He uses the abbreviation UBI from the words *unconditional basic income* (emphasis added, 1997: 312). In this respect the idea of an unconditional grant is stressed, which refers to the UBI being opposite to other, means-tested, conditional grants.

Pieter le Roux has concentrated on the idea of basic income in South Africa, and he uses the words *universal income grant*. As the word “universal” suggests, le Roux stresses the idea of everyone receiving the grant. In this definition le Roux goes further than White, since he even determines the amount of the grant. Le Roux has specifically concentrated on financing the grant through indirect taxes and increase in the value-added tax (VAT). (Le Roux 2003: 39.)

As White, Philippe Van Parijs also uses the term *universal basic income* (UBI) which, he argues, should be paid to everyone at a level “*sufficient for subsistence*” (2000). According to Van Parijs, the term “basic” refers to “something on which a person can safely count,” but, according to him, it is not connected to the “notion of 'basic needs'” (2000). Now, I want to point out the differences in definitions. Van Parijs suggests that

basic income is ideally given to permanent residents. He also stresses that the idea is not to offer individuals a possibility to purchase all the basic necessities, but to offer an income a person can rely on, and in this enable the individual to plan for future activities.

The definitions above are not necessarily exclusive. It is difficult to tell whether there are actual differences of opinion between the researchers about the definition or if they only emphasize different aspects. Furthermore, in the debate of the Basic Income Research Journal, some of the researchers simply use the term “Basic Income,” BI (see for example Widerquist 2006, Groot 2006 and Virjo 2006). Keeping the definitions given above in mind, I cite here the Namibian Basic Income Grant Coalition, or more specifically, the definition provided by Claudia and Dirk Haarmann, who write on behalf of the Desk for Social Development (DfSD) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia:

*“A Basic Income Grant (BIG) is a monthly cash grant (e.g. N\$100) that would be paid by the state to every Namibian citizen regardless of age or income. The money, which is paid to people not in need, is recuperated through the tax system. -
- Every Namibian would receive such a grant until s/he becomes eligible for a state pension at 60 years. In the case of children aged 17 or younger, the care-giver would receive the grant on behalf of the child.”
(Haarmann & Haarmann 2005.)*

Haarmann and Haarmann refer to the role of the state, and the sum is proposed. In addition to the definitions above, the recuperation through tax system is mentioned here. Furthermore, here the grant is restricted to people under the age of 60, in a way that the final level of all grants paid by the state remains unchanged. As explained above, there are various, slightly different definitions for the idea of Basic Income, but as the details of the Namibian BIG will be under scrutiny here, the definition of Haarmann and Haarmann are adopted. In line with this, the abbreviation for basic income grant, BIG will be used.

1.4 Aim of the Thesis

The aim of this thesis is to study the Basic Income Grant (BIG) proposal in Namibia and the organizational structure and motivations behind this proposal. There are at least three reasons for my interest in this specific topic. First, the discussion concerning basic income proposal in Namibia has been dominated by the BIG Coalition. This thesis offers another perspective, as it analyzes the work of the coalition itself. Secondly, the discussion on this proposal has an international aspect as the corresponding proposal has also been presented in South Africa. The discussion on the BIG does not only reach to Namibia, but also to South Africa, which certainly is the most influential country in the area. Therefore, it is even more important to discuss the proposal from several perspectives. Finally, there is a growing international interest towards alternative forms of development cooperation. Conditional and unconditional cash grant programs are being discussed worldwide and this thesis contributes to this discussion on its part. Although the BIG proposal itself is not commented upon in this thesis, it reminds that the experiments such as the BIG pilot project should be scrutinized against the motivations behind the proposal. Therefore, the thesis contributes to the wider international discussion on NGO coalitions and cash grant programmes.

2. Theoretical Background

There is a number of possibilities to study the concept of BIG and the work of the BIG Coalition. As mentioned earlier, I was originally interested in the impact of the BIG proposal. However, data collection concerning the pilot project proved to be quite a challenge for two reasons. First, it was practically impossible to collect detailed information concerning for example the consumption patterns of the citizens of Omitara⁹. Secondly, the information made available by the BIG Coalition was not enough to analyze the change in Omitara area, and requests for further data were denied. Especially this second point led me to further concentrate on the work of the BIG Coalition and to study its background. As the focus of this research is on the BIG Coalition, its history and formation, organization theory provides the proper theoretical background for the study. This then leads to the theory of David Mosse, which discusses development organizations, their policy proposals, and practice.

2.1 Background of the Study

This study takes a look into the BIG Coalition, which has been formed by Namibian non-governmental organizations, and its development during a time period of roughly five years. The starting point for this study is the definition of NGO sector in Namibia, and the formulation of the BIG Coalition. The relation between the coalition and its environment will be discussed. The data consists of interviews and observations from two field visits (conducted in 2008 and 2009), and of newspaper articles mostly covering the time period of five years, some articles reaching back to the beginning of the decade.

The four chapters of results provide a number of interlinked viewpoints to the Namibian proposal. First, the stakeholder analysis will introduce the set-up of the BIG Coalition in detail, and discuss the coalition as a specific form of an organization. Secondly, the formation of the coalition and critical events in the development of the proposal will be discussed. The third part of the results looks at the work of the coalition in connection to its environment. The theory of resource dependency – a theory originally presented by Jeffrey Pfeffer and Gerald R. Salancik (1978) is a central element in this analysis. In more detail, the concept of social legitimacy will be used. Finally the propositions concerning policy and practice by David Mosse (2005) will be discussed, as the debate concerning basic income is set to an international framework of development cooperation.

The case of the BIG proposal in this context is rather unique, especially from the perspective of the two-year pilot project of an unconditional cash grant. As the interest is in the very work of the BIG Coalition in Namibia, this study is an **intrinsic case study** (Stake 1995: 3); the study concentrates on analyzing this specific proposal in its unique environment, and does not attempt to directly generalize the results to other situations.

2.2 Organization Theory

Mary Jo Hatch and Ann L. Cunliffe describe the tradition of organizational research in their book *Organization Theory* (2006). They remind that the theorists come from very

different backgrounds, and from the time period when organization research was not a well-established field of academic study. The sociological and managerial traditions of organization theory draw from two different fields of study: “The sociological source, represented here by Émile Durkheim, Max Weber and Karl Marx, focused on the changing shapes and roles of formal organizations within society and the influences of industrialization on the nature of work and its consequences for workers. Classical management theory was shaped by Frederick Taylor, Mary Parker Follett - - and others - - and focused on the practical problems faced by managers - - .” (2006: 26-27.) This study relies on the sociological tradition of organization theory, more specifically on the theories of organizational environment and resource dependence.

2.3 Non-Governmental Organizations

According to London School of Economics Centre for Civil Society, the institutional forms of “uncoerced collective action around shared interests, purposes and values” refer to non-governmental organizations, which are the central element of this thesis (London School of Economics 2004).¹⁰ According to Clarke, “NGOs are private, non-profit, professional organizations, with a distinctive legal character, concerned with public welfare goals. In the developing world, NGOs include philanthropic foundations, church development agencies, academic think-tanks and other organizations focusing on issues such as human rights, gender, health, agricultural development, social welfare, the environment, and indigenous peoples” (Clarke 1998: 36-37). It is debatable whether the NGOs in Namibia are “professional organizations,” but they certainly include most of the characteristics Clarke mentions above. The Namibian example of this includes the Desk for Social Development of ELCRN, an organization which is a church development agency. As the number of different NGOs in the country is large, almost all the other organization types mentioned by Clarke can be found from the country.

David Korten discusses three generations concerning voluntary development action. The first generation organizations answer to the specific needs of the beneficiaries. They often provide relief for a short period of time, as they aim for quickly assisting those in need. The second generation, in turn, concentrates more on the developmental aspect of the specific group and the NGO and this group enter into a partnership, where

the organization is facilitating the activities of people themselves. Korten reminds that in practice, these projects end up providing mere handouts. Third generation NGOs seek to influence policies, as they have reached a point where it is understood that a single organization can rarely bring large-scale change in any country. This gives the organization a more catalytic role in development. However, Korten points out that the third generation organizations also face challenges he has not recognized in this theory. He refers to the argument of Serrano, where it is stated that “development theorists and practitioners” should learn new ways to discuss development, and look further than to the work of reparation in the cases of development projects (Korten 1990: 124). (1990: 114-124.)

Alan Thomas and Tim Allen claim that NGOs are often funded by government, but a key characteristic is that they are usually organizations not for profit. Thomas and Allen also distinguish between mutual benefit organizations and public benefit organizations. The first ones provide benefits for their members, and the second ones provide these to others who provide services to non-members as well. The “scope and scale” of these organizations also vary from “local, national and international” levels. Thomas and Allen claim that due to the declining roles of the states, the NGO sector has grown in the past half a century. However, they doubt that NGOs would ever bring a large change in an international context, as there is not enough funding available. (Thomas and Allen 2000: 210-213.) The Namibian BIG Coalition seems to have understood the claim by Thomas and Allen, as they seek to influence the politics of Namibia rather than work for mutual benefit of its members. The strategy of the coalition has been to form a pressure group, and as Margareth E. Keck and Kathryn Sikkink note “[n]etworks often have their greatest impact by working through governments and other powerful actors” (Keck & Sikkink 1998: 102).

The BIG Coalition will be understood as a coalition of different organizations, but also as an organization itself, with its own specific aims and functions. The analysis concentrates on the work of the coalition, and its development. It seems that the organization has multiple roles in Namibia, and these roles sometimes contradict with each other. Interestingly, the coalition seems to have functions in all generations of voluntary development action by Korten: The coalition has a pilot project, where urgent

needs for relief of the people in one village is provided. The organization, on the other hand, believes that handouts do assist people in need, as they can then empower themselves, and therefore the organization can be a mere facilitator of development – by providing funds. Finally, the coalition has an activist role as it lobbies for the policy proposal of basic income. The BIG proposal itself may be understood as a generation four project, as it can be understood as a new and innovative way for development, despite the relatively simple character of the proposal.

As the role of NGOs in advocacy work has increased in the past decades, the discussion on the legitimacy and accountability of these organizations themselves has recently increased. The criteria for NGO legitimacy are set for example by Attack (1999), and Unerman & O'Dwyer (2006) have theorized accountability for advocacy actions of NGOs. Hudson (2001) encourages NGOs to improve the relationships among themselves and those the organizations claim to represent. He understands the concept of legitimacy as a “socially constructed quality” (2001: 331) in a similar way as Lister (2003) discusses it. The concept of legitimacy is one of the central themes in this thesis, and as Hudson and Lister, I understand the concept as a social construct. Therefore, it is interesting to see, how the BIG Coalition seeks for social legitimacy in Namibia.

2.4 Coalition as an Organization

Although this study discusses the BIG Coalition from organizational perspective, coalition differs from other forms of organizations. Helen Yanacopulos distinguishes between networks and coalitions. According to her, “NGO coalitions form more permanent links than single-issue thematic transnational advocacy networks” (Yanacopulos 2005: 95). Permanent staff members and a more permanent membership base are also characteristics of coalitions. “Most importantly, they have broader strategic aims than single-issue thematically focused networks,” Yanacopulos adds (ibid.). Furthermore, a high level of commitment is required from the coalition member organizations (2005: 96).

Maria Roberts-DeGennaro discusses coalitions in the context of political advocacy. This brings in the concept of lobbying. Roberts-DeGennaro states that “[a]s a set of interacting organizations, the whole coalition must be guided by a purpose. This

dimension distinguishes a coalition from any loosely coupled group of organizations” (Roberts-DeGennaro 1986: 309). Roberts-DeGennaro reminds that when the coalition is being built, it is vital that the organizations understand why being a member of the coalition is in their best interest and that the purpose of the coalition should also be stated (1986: 309).

To conclude from these two sets of requirements for the coalitions, I will look into the following characteristics in the Namibian BIG Coalition. They are permanent links, permanent staff members, and permanent membership base. They contribute to the stability of the coalition. Second, I will look for the broad strategic aims of the coalition, and its purpose. Third, I will analyze the viewpoints on how the organizations think they benefit from the membership.

2.5 Organizational Environment and Stakeholders

Organizational environment in modernist organization theories, according to Hatch and Cunliffe, is considered “as an entity that lies outside the boundary of the organization - - It influences organizational outcomes by imposing constraints and demanding adaptation as the price of survival. The organization - - faces uncertainty about what the environment demands and experiences dependence on the multiple resources that its environment provides” (Hatch and Cunliffe 2006: 63). The first step in defining the environment is to define the organization, and decide where the organizational boundary lies. Hatch and Cunliffe also remind that different levels of environment may be used in the analysis, although the level of environment, to which one is focusing on at the specific moment, should be clearly stated in order to avoid confusion (2006: 66).

2.6 Resource Dependence and Social Legitimacy

The ideas of modernism, originating from the Enlightenment and initiated by philosophers Descartes, Locke and Kant, form the background for the Modernist organization theory. According to Hatch and Cunliffe “[m]odernist organization theorists believe that complete knowledge means understanding how and why organizations function the way they do and how their functioning is influenced by different environmental conditions” (2006: 37). Hatch and Cunliffe discuss the

resource dependence theory in the context of modernist theories of organizational environment. Pfeffer and Salancik emphasize the influence of the environment, as the organizations need resources and therefore they “must interact with others who control those resources” (Pfeffer and Salancik 1978: 278). The vulnerability of the organization, according to Hatch and Cunliffe, “is the result of its need for resources such as raw materials, labor, capital, equipment, knowledge and outlets for its products and services – resources that are controlled by the environment” (Hatch & Cunliffe 2006: 81). An important element in the analysis is the identification of these resources, and tracing them and after this, the environmental factors affecting the relationships between organization and its environments are searched for (2006: 80-83).¹¹

David Lewis discusses organization theory in relation to NGO management in his book *The Management of Non-Governmental Development Organizations* (2007). According to Lewis, many parts of the organizational theory are applicable to NGOs, and Lewis searches for the interaction points between the two (2007: 107). He addresses different areas of organization theory, which can be discussed in relation to NGOs. One of these is the already mentioned resource dependence perspective by Pfeffer and Salancik. The resource dependence perspective has been challenged for example by arguing that it perceives the organizations to be working under circumstances beyond their own control (ibid.). However, in this thesis, the perspective will be critically applied to the data collected. I am of the opinion that this perspective enhances the understanding of the work and activities, and certain choices made by the BIG Coalition.

The perspective of Hudson (2001) concerning legitimacy and political responsibility is briefly mentioned above. As Hudson, I perceive the legitimacy of an organization as a social construct, and therefore argue, that the organization needs to constantly search for it in its environment. Hudson argues, that “an NGO will find it extremely difficult – to put it mildly – to be perceived as legitimate by all of its differently-positioned stakeholders” (2001: 332). An organization needs several resources in order to function, but as I am interested in the legitimacy of the organization among its stakeholders, I will only look at social legitimacy as a resource in this thesis. Therefore, this study argues that the search for **social legitimacy** influences the internal work of the BIG Coalition. It is important to find out, who searches for it as well as the ways it is searched for.

2.7 From NGO-group to Development Organization

The BIG Coalition, its formation and transformation is analyzed in detail in the results of this thesis and the relationship with the environment is also under scrutiny. The final part of the analysis looks into the coalition in the context of development cooperation and into the role of the coalition in the context of the Namibian society. It draws together the elements from the earlier chapters and understands the BIG Coalition as an organization with the aim of development which is partially funded by donors. Therefore this part of the thesis considers the Coalition as a development NGO, and takes a viewpoint from where the activities are considered as those of development actor. David Mosse (2005) has conducted ethnographic research of British aid agencies working in India and his propositions will be considered from the viewpoint of the BIG in Namibia.

Mosse presents “five propositions about policy and practice” concerning development cooperation projects (2005: 14). These will be analyzed in the context of the BIG Coalition. The first argument states that “policy primarily functions to mobilise and maintain political support, that is to legitimise rather than to orientate practice”. This statement means that projects are not necessarily conducted in order to find best practices, but to legitimize the current one and seek support for it. The second argument states that “development interventions are not driven by policy but by the exigencies of organisations and the need to maintain relationships”. The second argument adds to the first one by stating that it is not the policy itself, which orientates the actions of organizations, but the mere urgency to legitimize the existence of the organization and its relations with the environment. The third proposal, in turn, suggests that “development projects work to maintain themselves as coherent policy ideas (as systems of representations) as well as operational systems”. This argument refers to the dual role of development organizations: They need to show consistency within their policy proposals, and on the other hand continue with the project in question. The fourth proposal discusses how the projects are failed and states: “Projects do not fail; they are failed by wider networks of support and validation.” As the BIG proposal is not fully dependent on one international (or national) donor, a policy-change would not have affected the project substantially. In fact, the BIG Coalition has been formulated to

lobby for only one policy proposal: basic income grant. Therefore, policy change from the coalition perspective was not to be expected. If the project is currently “failing,” this is due to other reasons, and therefore the fourth proposal will not be discussed further in this thesis.¹² The final claim states that “‘Success’ and ‘failure’ are policy-oriented judgments that obscure project effects”. Especially this claim for success is analyzed in the context of the BIG Coalition, as it was announced far before the BIG pilot project was concluded at the end of 2009. In conclusion, the final part of the results chapter takes a look at the transformation of the BIG Coalition into a development organization from the viewpoint of policy and practice. (Mosse 2005: 14-19.)

2.8 Research Question

I have presented above the theoretical background of this thesis. It includes concepts of organization, non-governmental organizations, coalition, organizational environment and stakeholders, resource dependence perspective and social legitimacy, as well as propositions about policy and practice. Based on these concepts, the research question is: **How has the Namibian BIG Coalition been formed and transformed during the time period between 2003 and 2009?** A number of supporting questions are included in the study. These are: What kind of an organization the BIG Coalition is? How have the BIG proposal and the BIG Coalition been formed in respect to critical events? How is social legitimacy maintained in the work of the BIG Coalition? Each part of the results answers to this question from its own perspective. First, however, I will present the methodology for data collection and its analysis.

3. Methodology

3.1 Case Study and Fact Perspective

This thesis is an **intrinsic case study** concerning the basic income grant proposal in Namibia. The case described here is unique, as it analyzes the work of a specific coalition and its actions in a specific environment. This is not to say that certain findings could not be applied elsewhere, but to remind that, the study proposes that the characteristics as a whole are unique to this specific case. The approach to the work of

the BIG Coalition is inspired by Annelise Riles, who describes her ethnographic study on organizations working in Fiji. In her book *The network inside out*, she shows that a network itself (or in this case a coalition) can be the focal point in the research of development projects (Riles 2000).

Typical to case study approach, the data for this thesis was collected in a number of ways. First, I collected newspaper articles from newspapers and magazines, secondly I conducted interviews, and thirdly I visited the BIG village and did observations there. Naturally, in addition to this, I collected background material of Namibia and followed the discussion in media as well as reviewed relevant literature.

According to Alasuutari (1999), fact perspective as a research method has three characteristics. First, this perspective differentiates between the real world, and the claims made from this world. Second, the perspective assists in evaluating the truthfulness of specific information. Third, the perspective understands the real world in everyday terms. Alasuutari illustrates fact perspective by drawing a picture, where an eye looks into the real world through the lens of the collected data.¹³ (1999: 90-92.)

The fact perspective will be used in this case study to analyze the BIG Coalition and its work. I will mostly rely on the evidence perspective when analyzing the data. This perspective understands the information collected as a testimony of the reality. Only with part of the observations, I rely on the indicator perspective. This means that I understand the observations as indicating certain things from the real world, but do not analyze everything solely as a testimony of the reality. (Alasuutari 1999: 95-96.)

The case study methodology was chosen for this research due to the nature of the basic income proposal in Namibia: it provides a specific case, where the lines for the research have been relatively easy to draw. Fact perspective assists in analyzing the data of this case study. Next, I will present the data sets, and discuss the methodology in their context. Possible limitations concerning the methodology will also be discussed.

Interviews

The interviews were conducted mostly during the first field work period in 2008. These eighteen interviews are primarily collected from the representatives of different organizations supporting the BIG proposal. Other group of interviews is collected from the inhabitants of Omitara/Otjivero village. The interviews were semi-structured, and they range from a short, five-minute chat to very detailed two-hour conversations. This might tell about the willingness or unwillingness of the interviewees to answer my questions. However, the motivations of the interviewees will not be speculated upon here, although the analysis of the interviews will be presented in the results. Approximately half of the interviews are recorded and transcribed, whereas the others were written down in detail

The analysis of these interviews proposes how different actors perceive the basic income grant proposal, and how the BIG Coalition is structured. From the interviews conducted in Omitara, I wanted to find out especially how the people of the village see the prospects of the funding of the BIG. In brief, the aim of the interviews is to understand the structure of the BIG Coalition, to assist in conducting stakeholder analysis, and analyzing the relationship with the environment of the organization. Furthermore, the interviews assist in the analysis of the social legitimacy of the BIG Coalition.

There are certain limitations in this data set. First, my method of interviewing developed in the process, and the first interviews are not of as high quality as the ones conducted later. Second, not all the interviewees were familiar with the concept of basic income and therefore I found myself from the position, where I explained the concept to the interviewee, who then formed an opinion on the subject, and answered my questions. Third, as the interviewing methods, also the detailed research question evolved in the research process, and this might have affected some of the interviews.

Newspapers and Magazines

Namibian newspapers have quite extensive online archives, and therefore I was able to find articles from several years back. It is my understanding that the coalition members

tried to accompany the journalists as often as possible when they went to the village. Therefore, extensive analysis of the situation of the village and the experiment cannot be searched for in these articles and one needs to analyze them critically. However, these articles provide the chronological backbone of the events that occurred before, during, and after the BIG project. The articles published in newspapers New Era and the Namibian are analyzed in this thesis. Some articles in the daily German-speaking newspaper, Allgemeine Zeitung, are also analyzed.

The relations with the environment can be analyzed by studying the articles from the newspapers mentioned above. The search for social legitimacy is also analyzed within this context, as I will look into the spokespeople of the coalition. Finally, these articles will also provide the chronological background for different events during the development of the BIG Coalition, and the transformation to the development NGO.

To my understanding, this source of information is quite reliable and I believe fact perspective provides necessary information on many events during the development of the basic income proposal. However, there are two points I want to make in relation to the newspaper articles as a data set. First, due to language constraints I have been restricted to mainly concentrate on the English-speaking articles. Second, as the articles are written by a handful of journalists, it is possible that their personal opinions are to certain extent reflected in this material.

Observations and Background Material

This data set includes general observations, informal discussions, and meetings with different people of Omitara village. Even though my research was not ethnographic, certain aspects from this approach were applied in the research. These include detailed observations and writing of memos twice a day, while staying in Omitara village. The observations provide valuable knowledge concerning the situation of the people staying in the village, and assist in understanding the environment, where the BIG Coalition works. Background material includes all such material relevant to the thesis, which is not included in the other data sets. An example of this includes brochures and other notes.

There are certain limitations within the observations and background material. As I had not stayed in the village for a long period of time, the observations are written from an outsider's point of view. My interpretation of some events may be incorrect due to the lack of familiarity of the context of the village. On the other hand, I had been in Namibia for quite some time before going to Omitara, and therefore I was able to understand the culture of the village to a certain extent. Second, the background material consists of various kinds of materials, and therefore it is quite scattered. However, this material works together with the other data, and on its part assists in understanding the work of the BIG Coalition as a whole.

3.2 Data Analysis

Data analysis attempts to engage the theoretical background presented above, and the data collected in methods presented above into a dialogue, which brings out the results of this research. For the data analysis, the interviews were transcribed. The key points from the interviews were highlighted (ie. those parts of the discussions that concern the BIG), and specific parts of the newspaper articles were also highlighted (these include for example the persons representing the coalition). These newspaper articles, interviews and background material were all used in setting up the timeline of the key events in the development of the BIG Coalition and the BIG proposal in Namibia. The background material gained from the homepages of the Namibian and South African BIG Coalitions, in addition to the publications of the coalitions and people closely affiliated to it, were used in looking at the background of the BIG proposal in South Africa. The newspaper articles, interviews, and the observation material from the pilot project village were used in analyzing the relationship between the coalition and its environment as well as defining the position of the coalition and its work in the context of national and international development discourse.

3.3 Research Ethics

Research ethics should be carefully considered, when conducting a field research in development studies. The most important aspect of this is the study of vulnerable groups. Liamputtong and Ezzy (2005: 204) define several vulnerable groups that

include specific groups of people such as homeless, children, severely ill, sick, sex workers, and ethnic minorities. They remind that the list is not exhaustive (ibid.) and it is indeed possible to define a larger number of vulnerable groups in the field of development studies. At least one vulnerable group can be identified in my research. This group consists of the people living in Omitara/Otjivero informal settlement area. These people were often uneducated and faced numerous challenges with their daily lives.

In this research the vulnerable group mentioned above was carefully approached. One of the most important things was to have a translator to assist with the interviews. This was to ensure that the purpose of the study was clear to the interviewee. It was important to convey that the discussions were anonymous, and that I was working independently from the BIG Coalition, or for example from the government as well. During the second visit to the village in 2009, small pieces of paper explaining the purpose of the research in English and including my contact details, was given to the interviewee. After the interviews of the second visit, the interviewees were given small telephone vouchers as a token of gratitude. These vouchers are commonly used in Namibia and they enable one to make a phone call for some minutes, or to send few SMS messages.

Liamputtong and Ezzy, referring to a number of studies, point out different factors that may hinder the research of vulnerable groups. They mention a "snow ball effect" which is not functioning when collecting information with the vulnerable groups, as people might protect each other, and thereby deny the access to the source of information (2005: 214). The lack of this effect could be observed when I began the research concerning the BIG project. First, I had hoped to be able to collect information from the representatives of the coalition. However, they strongly recommended that I would not go to the pilot project village, and were not either willing to share their own information with me. They were not either interested in taking me into their research group¹⁴. Secondly, during my stay at the Omitara/Otjivero village, the effect was not taking place. During the second visit, a representative of the BIG Village Committee told us not to interview people without the presence of the representative of the committee, as

otherwise people could say wrong things concerning the BIG project (Omitara 20.6.2009). This was a clear sign of the protection of possible informants.

The chapters above have explained the theoretical background for the thesis. This chapter has presented methodology for the research, and finally discussed the research ethics of the study. The following chapters of the thesis present the data together with its analysis. As shortly described in the theoretical background, first the structure of the Basic Income Grant Coalition will be described, and the coalition with its stakeholders and environment will be analyzed. Thereafter the critical events in the formation of the BIG Coalition will be analyzed. After this, the analysis investigates the clashes between organization and its environment, from the viewpoint of social legitimacy. Finally, the transformation of the church-based NGO-coalition into a development coalition will be analyzed from the viewpoint of policy and practice.

4. Coalition and its Environment

4.1 Central Elements of the Chapter

In this chapter I present the analysis of the BIG Coalition as an organization. The structure of the coalition will be presented and analyzed in the stakeholder analysis. The organizational environment will be discussed in this concept, and two examples from the environment will be presented. These two cases assist in understanding the structure of the coalition and its relationship with different stakeholders and the environment. The first case analyzes the relation of the Namibian BIG Coalition and the South African Coalition, and the second one concentrates on the details of a workshop conducted by the Namibian BIG Coalition to the Namibian NGOs.

The analysis looks into the internal structure of the coalition, to its environment, as well as to the relation of the Namibian proposal to its South African counterpart. Therefore, this chapter will discuss the formation and the work of the coalition, as well as the relationship between the coalition and its environment. Central concepts in this chapter are *coalition*, *environment* and *stakeholders*. This chapter seeks an answer to the question: How have the BIG proposal and the BIG Coalition been formed?

4.2 Coalition as an Organization

As will be seen from the example of the BIG Coalition, a coalition can be set up for conducting advocacy work and for lobbying the government. According to Yanacopulos (2005), coalitions are characterized by permanent staff members as well as a permanent membership base. In comparison with networks, coalitions also have “broader strategic aims” (2005). Roberts-DeGennaro (1986), in turn, views coalitions as actors of political advocacy. Therefore, coalitions are formed by interacting organizations, which are “guided by a purpose” (1986: 309). Furthermore, the coalition needs to be guided by a purpose, and the benefits of the coalition membership need to be clear to the member organizations. These characteristics differentiate coalitions from other, more loosely organized networks (ibid.).

From the definitions above, a number of characteristics of coalitions can be defined. According to these, **coalitions should have permanent links and staff members, permanent membership base, broad strategic aims and specific purpose for the activities, and finally, coalitions should be able to show clear benefits to the member organizations.** The next part will take a look at the member organizations of the BIG Coalition, the underlying principles behind the South African and Namibian coalitions, and the linkages between the organizations and the coalition. The four criteria mentioned above will also be used in the analysis.

Members of the Namibian BIG Coalition

The Namibian Basic Income Coalition is a platform for organizations that support the idea of Basic Income Grant in the country. These organizations include Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN), Namibian NGO Forum (NANGOF), National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) and Namibia Network of AIDS Service Organizations (NANASO) (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2008a: 13). In addition to these umbrella organizations, individual organizations include Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI) and Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) (ibid.). “[T]he Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN) with its Desk for Social Development (DfSD) is the legal administrative and financial home responsible for the implementation of the BIG Pilot Project on behalf of the BIG Coalition” (Basic Income

Grant Coalition 2008a: 13). National Youth Council (NYC) and the Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO) have joined the coalition recently (!Hoasës 2009a, *Allgemeine Zeitung* 2009).

These organizations vary in size and their role in the Namibian society differs. The Council of Churches in Namibia is an ecumenical alliance of Christian churches in Namibia, and in 2008 it was chaired by Bishop Sindano from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) (Transformation Namibia 2008). The supportive work for the BIG Coalition is mainly conducted in the congregations and for example offerings are donated for the Pilot Project through the church (NANGOF 2008, Tjaronda 2008d). CCN is an ecumenical alliance, and therefore it may be challenging to specify the role of the churches such as ELCRN and ELCIN, in comparison with the role of the CCN in the coalition. When interviewed, the representative of CCN and ELCIN did not specify the different roles of the individual churches and the coalition (CCN 2008). This indicates that the CCN has a permanent role in the coalition. It has also been a member since the very beginning. However, the benefits of the coalition membership to the CCN are not specified. The role of the individual organizations in CCN, in regard to the BIG Coalition, is not specified.

NANGOF, Namibian NGO Forum, is one of the umbrella organizations in the coalition. The organization aims at facilitating policies which increase the participation of civil society, gives out information, and has programs that strengthen the capabilities of non-governmental organizations (NANGOF 2007). According to the representative of NANGOF, the role of the organization is not to conduct research concerning the BIG, but it is prepared to help out in the field work and funding (NANGOF 2008). Furthermore, NANGOF is not unified with the opinions concerning Basic Income Grant, but according to the representative, the debate is positive (ibid.). Some member organizations of NANGOF were not, however, supportive to the idea, rather the other way around, and not even in a positive manner. For example the representative of Namibia Housing Action Group, referred to the idea of Basic Income Grant as totally opposite to the underlying values of her organization (Namibia Housing Action Group 2008). The representative of Forum for the Future mentioned that BIG might create dependency (Forum for the Future 2008). NANGOF has been a member of the coalition

since its foundation, and it is a permanent member. The benefits of the membership are not very clear, as the opinions concerning the BIG proposal vary within the member organizations of NANGOF.

According to Henning Melber, there was a demand for worker's unions in Namibia after the repressive system of apartheid (Melber 1983). In addition to this, the left-wing political rhetoric was also supportive of the organization of the working people and furthermore, as the mining industry sector grew in Namibia, there was a new group of working black people ready to demand better labor contracts. National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW) was formed in 1970's (ibid.). This organization is closely related to the Labour Resource and Research Institute, LaRRI. When I contacted the organization for the interview concerning the role of NUNW in the BIG Coalition, the organization referred me to LaRRI. It is therefore very challenging to state whether the organization has a permanent membership within the coalition, as it has not publicly been a very active member. Furthermore, the benefits of the membership are hard to define.¹⁵

LaRRI is the research organization for trade unions and provides "specifically labour-related research and training services to the labour movement" (LaRRI 2006). The representative of LaRRI is very active in the BIG Coalition, and therefore it seems that the organization is a very permanent member of the coalition. The benefits to the organization might include the visibility the membership has provided, although this was not mentioned in the interview.

Namibia Network of AIDS Service Organizations, NANASO is a network organization in the field of HIV/AIDS. It was formed in 1991 and it provides services to non-governmental organizations, faith-based organizations, and community-based organizations (NANASO 2008a). The representative of the organization mentioned that the umbrella organization covers more than 800 organizations and that it has an effective network for information sharing (NANASO 2008b). According to the representative, this gives the organization a specific role in BIG Coalition, since questions with HIV/AIDS are closely linked to the issues of poverty (ibid.). As with the previous organizations, NANASO seems to be a permanent member of the coalition.

According to the representative of the organization, the members of the umbrella organizations would benefit from the BIG, and therefore it is possible to deduct that the membership of the coalition is beneficial to NANASO as well.

Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) concentrates on the protection of “the human rights of all Namibians” and was formed in 1988 (LAC 2008). It has a head office in Windhoek and two regional offices and the organization works in five areas which include litigation, information and advice, education and training, research as well as law reform and advocacy (LAC 2008). As with the case of NUNW, it seems that LAC does not have an active role in the BIG Coalition, and only the AIDS and Law unit ALU of the LAC is a member of the coalition (LAC 2006). Therefore, it is very difficult to define if the organization is a permanent member of the coalition, or if it benefits from the membership.

According to the Secretary General Mandela Kapere of the National Youth Council of Namibia, the Council is well known as a social justice movement and a majority of Namibian unemployed are youngsters (!Hoases 2009b). Therefore, the organization decided to join the BIG Coalition (ibid.). Kapere saw the BIG as another option for “failed predatory capitalism,” and suggested that the state-led social development should be enhanced (ibid.). As one of the newest member organizations of the coalition, the membership of the NYC cannot yet be perceived as permanent. However, it is quite possible this will change in due course. The benefits of the membership are not as yet clear.

The English-speaking newspapers in Namibia did not announce the joining of Church Alliance for Orphans (CAFO) to the BIG Coalition. The CAFO homepage does not mention this either, but the Quarterly Newsletter of the organization published in December 2009 states the following: “CAFO has officially joined the Basic Income Grant Coalition at its recent AFM. CAFO is confident that this process would change the face of unemployment and poverty in this country, bringing hope for the orphan and the vulnerable children” (CAFO 2009). According to this statement, the benefits of the membership would include further support to the organization, as its target group would benefit from the grant. However, the membership itself is not the benefit, but the

introduction of basic income on the national level. As was the case with the NYC, the membership of CAFO in the BIG Coalition does not yet seem to be permanent, but might change in due course. However, the organization has not been very visible in the coalition, as not even the entry was publicly announced.

The information on permanent staff members of the coalition is not public, which hinders the analysis of the organizational structure of the BIG Coalition. However, Dirk and Claudia Haarmann are working for the Desk for Social Development under the ELCRN Church, and they are mentioned as the project directors in the BIG pilot project. Therefore, the coalition seems to have permanent staff members. However, as the pilot project is being concluded, it is difficult to say whether they will continue to work for the BIG Coalition. The broad strategic aim of the coalition is to convince the government of Namibia to introduce the basic income in the country. This is also the purpose of the activities of the coalition.

The coalition clearly fulfills at least two of the requirements mentioned in the beginning of this chapter: The coalition has permanent staff members and specific purpose for the activities. As discussed in this chapter, the fulfillment of the other requirements is more questionable. The membership base is not necessarily permanent, and it is unclear whether the member organizations benefit from the membership of the BIG Coalition. Therefore I am arguing that the BIG Coalition is not theoretically clearly a coalition, but may also be understood as a network of organizations. However, in order to avoid confusion, I will continue to use the term coalition, when referring to the Namibian BIG Coalition.

This thesis often refers to the viewpoint or the opinion of “the coalition”. However, most often the statements are not made in the name of the whole coalition (with the exception of few press releases and booklets), but through a spokesperson representing the coalition. The role of these spokespersons will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters, but for now, it suffices to mention the loudest spokespersons¹⁶ of the coalition. These include Bishop Kameeta, Dirk Haarmann, Herbert Jauch, Claudia Haarmann, and Uhuru Dempers. To be coherent with the newspaper articles, the opinion of these people will be considered as the official opinion of the BIG Coalition.

Coalition – a Permanent Organization?

It is challenging to strictly define the BIG Coalition in the terms of Yanacopulos. This coalition might be merely a single-issue advocacy network than a coalition with a permanent membership base. Furthermore, the coalition does not have broad strategic aims, but it is very much concentrated on one issue, lobbying for the basic income. Some of the member organizations have very strong linkages to the BIG Coalition, but others are more or less in the outskirts of the organization. The organization is definitely “guided by a purpose,” a requirement proposed by Roberts-DeGennaro. It is not sure however, how well all the member organizations “understand why being a member of the coalition is in their best interest,” this is the case especially with the member organizations of the umbrella bodies.

It is possible that when building the BIG Coalition, the impression of strong linkages and a permanent membership base has been given. This provides the coalition with more legitimacy in the society, as it can claim to have a very large support group in the background. As it will be seen in the case of the BIG workshop, the coalition is able to gain support within the civil society sector. However, mobilizing this support, and expanding it to the other sectors of the society, such as to government and researchers, has been a challenge for the BIG Coalition. This will be discussed in later chapters, when the clashes between the coalition and its environment are analyzed in more detail. Before that, the stakeholders of the BIG Coalition and its environment will be analyzed.

4.3 Environment and Stakeholder Analysis

This part of the analysis will discuss the environment of the BIG Coalition. Hatch and Cunliffe warn that the line between the organization and its environment is not easy to draw. In this part, I will define the **key stakeholders** and **stakeholders** of the BIG Coalition. Thereafter, I will place these stakeholders into three levels of organizational environment presented by Hatch and Cunliffe: “the **interorganizational network**, the **general environment** and the **international environment**” (Hatch & Cunliffe 2006: 66). These, in turn, can be divided into subcategories (ibid.). However, the division into subcategories is not made here, but the division into these three categories assists in understanding the role of different stakeholders within the context of BIG Coalition.

The final part of the chapter will present two cases of the organizational environment. The first one gives an example of similarities between another organization and the BIG Coalition, a case from the interorganizational network. The second case analyses the relationship between the BIG Coalition and organizations from both the interorganizational network and from the general environment.

Key stakeholders are considered as crucial actors for the functions of the organization, although they are not part of it. **Stakeholders** are naturally not as crucial as key stakeholders, but they are still related to the organization under scrutiny. According to Hatch and Cunliffe, “every organization interacts with other members of its environment” (2006: 66). Those individuals, groups, or organizations that have a key role in the context of the organization, are stakeholders, according to the narrow definition of the term (ibid.). As mentioned above, it is not always clear who is part of the organization, and who is a stakeholder, and belongs to the environment.

Stakeholders of the BIG Coalition

The role of the organizations under the umbrella bodies – CCN, NANASO, NANGOF and NUNW – is challenging to define. For example some of the organizations were not supportive of the BIG proposal (NHAG 2008), did not strongly oppose but were not active in the coalition (Penduka 2008), or had critical opinions concerning the proposal (FFF 2008). These organizations are clearly not part of the coalition, but they are stakeholders in relation to it. The role of the ELCRN Church is more complicated as for example Bishop Zephania Kameeta of the ELCRN has been one of the key figures in promoting the grant (see Tjaronda 2006b, Isaacs 2007a, b, c, d, and 2008C among others). For the sake of consistency, ELCRN is not considered part of the coalition, as Namibia Housing Action Group, Penduka, or Forum for the Future are neither part of the BIG Coalition. ELCRN is working in the coalition as a member of the CCN of Namibia, and the latter organizations are related to the coalition through NANGOF. Because of the visible role of the ELCRN Church in the context of the BIG Coalition, it is considered as a key stakeholder in the analysis. Although not clearly stating it in the statement for the BIG, the Desk for Social Development of the ELCRN is the secretary of the coalition. DfSD is considered being part of the organizational structure of the

BIG Coalition¹⁷. National Youth Council and Church Alliance for Orphans are considered as being part of the coalition, after they have announced their entry.

The organizations mentioned above are not the only members with an unclear relationship to the BIG Coalition. The coalition claims that a “team of international renowned research experts assists and advises on the research methodology” (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2008a). Furthermore, a number of international organizations have provided financial assistance to the coalition. Are these two groups part of the organization itself, or part of the environment? Because they have a significant role in the work of the coalition, but they are not mentioned as the signatories of the BIG Coalition, they are considered as key stakeholders in this analysis.

How about the BIG Committee in Otjivero/Omitara village? The coalition says that “It is important to stress that this [setting up the Village Committee for BIG] was an entirely organic process initiated and developed by the community itself without outside interference” (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2008: 44) but a member of this Committee said that “Actually what they told us was to establish a committee from ourselves” (BIG Committee 12.6.2008b). If the BIG Coalition wanted to establish a Village Committee to be its structural counterpart in the pilot project village, then that committee could be considered part of the organization. On the other hand, if the people of the village decided to set up the committee themselves, it would not have this position. As only the BIG Coalition members are officially mentioned as part of the coalition, it will be considered the starting point for this study as well. Therefore, also this group is considered as a key stakeholder in relation with the BIG Coalition.

Other Namibian NGOs, often members of one of the umbrella bodies of the coalition, have more indirect influence to the work of the coalition, and are therefore considered as stakeholders at this point. The government of Namibia can also be categorized as a stakeholder. Furthermore, South African BIG Coalition is categorized as a stakeholder of the BIG Coalition.

Three Levels of Organizational Environment

The **interorganizational network** refers to the organization under scrutiny, and to the organizations surrounding it. These organizations communicate with each other, and therefore form a network. It is important to note that not only NGOs are understood as organizations here: official government organizations may also form a part of this network. As other organizations than the members of the BIG Coalition do have close relation to the BIG Pilot project and the BIG proposal in Namibia, the stakeholder analysis and an interorganizational network analysis is vital for the study. In this study, the interorganizational network includes the BIG Coalition and stakeholders related to the coalition. These are the member organizations of those umbrella bodies that are part of the BIG Coalition, and other civil society organizations of Namibia. The government of Namibia can also be categorized as part of the interorganizational network. Furthermore, the South African BIG Coalition has had special influence to its Namibian counterpart and therefore is also a part of the interorganizational network.

The international environment in turn, refers to the organizations surrounding the initial organization, outside its national borders. The donor organizations can be categorized as stakeholders in the **international environment**, with the other international actors such as the international community contributing to the debate. The difference between the South African and other international organizations lies in their relationship with the Namibian project.

According to Hatch and Cunliffe, it is vital to understand and analyze the “conditions and trends in the **general environment** in addition to the interorganizational network in order to fully appreciate the links between an organization and its environment” (Hatch & Cunliffe 2006: 68). The general environment includes those stakeholders between the interorganizational network and international environment. The “general environment” refers to the rest of the environment, after the international environment and the interorganizational network have been defined. Although the government of Namibia is part of the interorganizational network, the country and the society surrounding the BIG Coalition is part of the general environment.

Interorganizational Linkages to the Coalition

The umbrella bodies that are members of the BIG Coalition claim to represent their member organizations as well. However, these member organizations are not always publicly supporting the BIG, or they might oppose the idea. This was the case with the NHAG. Veronika DeKlerk from Women's Action for Development (WAD) has stated the following "While WAD supports the forthcoming legislation that would pave the way for a poverty grant to the needy, the organization proposes that it should be handled as an interim measure which should be phased out after some years to discourage dependency among the poor" (Isaacs 2005b). The BIG Coalition has interpreted this claim to oppose the proposal (Brakwater 2009).

When interviewed, for example the representative of NANASO mentioned that the organization is part of the Board of the coalition, which is simultaneously the executive (NANASOb 2008). However, NANASO, LAC and NUNW have been very quiet in the newspapers. The representatives of the BIG Coalition are most often Bishop Kameeta or Dirk Haarmann, both from the ELCRN, representing CCN or DfSD in the coalition respectively. Herbert Jauch from LaRRI has also been an active spokesperson in the coalition. The linkages of the organizations to the BIG Coalition vary. The member organizations of NANGOF such as Penduka, WAD, NHAG and FFF have a number of opinions concerning the BIG proposal, and in some of these organizations the topic is discussed more intensively than in others (Penduka 2008, FFF 2008, NHAG 2008). Not all the member organizations of the BIG Coalition have strong relationship with other representatives of the coalition.

BIG Platform in South Africa and in Namibia: Comparison

Now I will turn to analyze the similarities between the BIG Coalitions of South Africa and Namibia. The aim is to shed light on the special relationship between these two organizations. The BIG Platform provides an example of these similar elements between these two organizations. As mentioned above, the South African BIG Coalition is a stakeholder of the Namibian BIG Coalition in the interorganizational network. This is only one example of a large number of similarities between these two coalitions.

The organizations of South African BIG Coalition agree that the introduction of basic income grant should be the “key intervention to combat poverty and to improve the lives of the majority of South Africans” (Appendix 1). The agreement states that more than half of South African population live in poverty, and demonstrates five ways in which this will be done. These include the provision of minimum level of income, providing the poorest households to meet the basic needs, stimulation of economic development, promotion of “family and community stability,” as well as “affirming and supporting the inherent dignity of all”. The fundamental principles of the proposal include “**Universal Coverage**, - - Relationship to existing grants: It should expand the social security net. - - Amount: **The grant should be no less than R100** per person per month¹⁸ - - Delivery Mechanisms: Payments should be facilitated through Public Institutions. - - Financing: A substantial part of the **cost of the grant should be recovered progressively through the tax system**” (Appendix 1). This agreement can be attained from the homepage of the South African BIG Coalition and it is signed by twelve organizations. This homepage also provides the constitution of the organization, approved and accepted 4 December 2003 (South African BIG Coalition 2003).

The Namibian version states three main issues: “Namibia has extremely high levels of poverty and the highest incidence of income inequality in the world. - - poverty is a contributing factor to the spread of HIV/AIDS and thereby undermining economic security, and, at the same time exacerbating poverty. - - the Basic Income Grant is a necessity to reduce poverty and to promote economic empowerment, freeing the productive potential of the people currently trapped in the vicious and deadly cycle of poverty” (Appendix 2). This leads to the four-point principles of the proposition: “1. We agree that **every Namibian should receive a Basic Income Grant** until she or he becomes eligible for a government pension at 60 years. 2. The level of the Basic Income Grant should be not less than **N\$ 100 per person per month**. 3. The Basic Income Grant should be an **unconditional** grant to every Namibian. 4. The costs for the Basic Income Grant should be recovered through a combination of **progressively designed tax reforms**.” (Own emphases, appendix 2). The undersigned organizations include CCN, NUNW, NANGOF, LAC and LaRRI.

The BIG Coalition of Namibia has added two perspectives to the South African proposal. First, it mentions the high level of inequality in the country, and secondly, the relationship between poverty and HIV/AIDS is mentioned. Not all parts are as detailed as in the South African proposal. For example, the Namibian version does not explicitly state that the level of social assistance should not drop due to the grant. The requirement for inflation indexing is not mentioned, and the delivery mechanisms are not proposed. Tax reform is mentioned in the Namibian version, but the aspect of solidarity and the suggestion for new measures in increasing revenue are left out. The number of signatory organizations is far less in the Namibian proposal, but this might simply be due to the smaller number of civil society organizations in the country. The constitution of the Namibian BIG Coalition is not provided. (Appendices 1 and 2.)

When comparing the two “platforms,” it is not difficult to see that the two organizations are closely linked to each other. The above examples stress the similarities between the proposals, but there are other similarities as well. The whole organizational form of coalition is chosen for the promotion of the basic income grant. The signatories include similar kind of organizations, and both coalitions have published their aims in similar kind of forms. As will be seen later, some of the BIG proponents of South Africa have also been active in Namibia. All this indicates that the South African BIG Coalition has a very special connection to the Namibian BIG Coalition and it indeed seems possible that the South African BIG Coalition has provided model for the Namibian BIG Coalition for organizing its activities.

Workshop for the Lobbyists – Securing the Support of the NGO Sector

This part of the chapter sheds light on the relationship between the BIG Coalition and the interorganizational environment, the stakeholders from the Namibian NGO-sector. Secondly, it assists in analyzing the structure of the coalition by taking a look at the spokespeople. It asks who has the central role, and what are the methods used to convey the central message forwards. It also gives an idea of the behavior of the BIG Coalition when it comes to the critical comments towards the proposal, although this will be analyzed in detail in later chapters.

The spokespeople of the BIG Coalition are those who discuss the proposal with the wider audience. First, of course the coalition needed to make sure that the media and the government do know what is included in the BIG proposal. As the pilot project started, the members of the Omitara/Otjivero village needed to be informed. Finally, it was the time for the civil society and the wider audience to get involved. For this, the coalition organized workshops, where the representatives of the civil society were invited. I was lucky to be able to participate in one of these workshops (this was actually the first, and probably the largest one) organized in a lodge some 30km from the capital city, Windhoek in July 2009.

As workshops are a common practice among different organizations in Namibia, it was quite natural for the BIG Coalition to organize one for the representatives of the member organizations, as well as to other Namibian stakeholders. The purpose of the workshop was to train campaigners for the lobbying of BIG. The organizations included CAFO, NYC, FFF, Namibia Planned Parenthood Association NAPPA, NANASO, Ministry of Health and Social Services, Women's Solidarity Namibia, P.E.A.C.E Centre, Namibia Paralegal Association (NPA) and Community Empowerment Development Action (CEDA). Altogether approximately 50 people attended the three-day workshop. I was present on the second and third days, when the more formal program took place. The speakers in the workshop included Bishop Kameeta, Uhuru Dempers from Nangof Trust¹⁹, Dirk Haarmann, and Herbert Jauch. Hilma Shindondola-Mote was also present. Bishop Kameeta gave an emotional opening speech, after which Uhuru Dempers told that the intention was to discuss BIG also critically. This was to be done in order to ensure that everybody would be able to answer to the critical questions presented towards the proposal. (Brakwater 2009.)

It was interesting to notice how the attitudes of the representatives of the organizations changed during this workshop. A number of critical points were raised in the discussions, and they received varying responses. At the beginning of the workshop, the participants were asked to pronounce their fears concerning the workshop. Among others, these included following: "too much disagreements between the participants, that not everybody agrees about the principles of the basic income grant, and that the BIG proposal would be mixed with the party politics". These answers reveal that

although the participants of the workshop were outspoken to certain extent, they were still afraid of the lack of consensus among each other. Although this exercise was done at the very beginning of the workshop, nobody questioned the BIG pilot project itself – neither its principles nor its outcomes. This indicates that the coalition had gained social legitimacy among the participant organizations.

After the presentation by Herbert Jauch concerning poverty in Namibia, and a presentation of the BIG proposal by Dirk Haarmann, the participants were divided into groups. The groups were asked to discuss the positive effects of the basic income to the life of the people in Omitara/Otjivero village. The opening session of the final day was emotional and very positive towards the proposal. Participants could recap a number of figures presented during the previous day, and a number of addresses were made in support of the BIG. One of the comments for example stated that this was the time to make history in the country.

Finally, the participants were divided into different groups, and they were asked to come up with different strategies to promote the BIG proposal. My group consisted of the representatives of the NGOs (as other groups included members of church or government-based organizations), and a number of enthusiastic proposals were made. Documentary films, TV-commercials and panel discussions were proposed to be used when lobbying for the grant. Art, drama, music and business sector could also be used to convey the message. According to this group, it would also be important to educate more people for campaigning and to form pressure groups. (Brakwater 2009.)

Despite the very innovative ideas by the enthusiastic participants, during the time period under scrutiny, none of these ideas had been taken forward by the BIG Coalition. It is of course possible that these have been taken up in individual attempts and private discussions, but for example newspapers or the homepage of the BIG Coalition do not indicate anything towards these kinds of activities. This suggests that the role of the interorganizational network in relation to the BIG Coalition is to support its activities, but not to actively take part in its work.

In conclusion, a number of civil society organizations were very much interested in the BIG proposal, although not all of them had much information on the subject. The

workshop proved to be a very efficient way in promoting the idea and convincing the skeptics. The Coalition seems to have strong social legitimacy within the civil society organizations. None of the organizations attending the workshop openly questioned the work of the coalition. It was rather the opposite, as one participant wanted to thank the coalition members and the researchers for their efforts. The criticism towards the coalition would have seemed impolite, as the coalition was providing the workshop including accommodation and catering. (Brakwater 2009.)

4.4 Conclusion: Relations of the Coalition

This chapter has presented the structure of the BIG Coalition, the central elements in the analysis of this form of an organization, as well as analyzed the environment and the stakeholders. Finally, two cases concerning the relations with the stakeholders have been presented. It was observed, that the BIG Coalition might also be understood as a network of organizations rather than a coalition. Members of the coalition do not always have close linkages to their own member organizations, and therefore the BIG Coalition can be understood as a network of organizations. However, to avoid confusion, the term “coalition” is used in this thesis. The BIG Coalition has built its relations with the environment in a number of ways. The first case showed the influence of South African BIG Coalition Platform to the Namibian Platform, and the second on the other hand, described the influence of the Namibian coalition to a number of NGOs. The latter example showed how the representatives of the BIG Coalition use their power to prove their legitimacy in the society. The representatives are capable of convincing their audience when the largest part of it consists of the representatives of civil society. This legitimacy is questioned by government and researchers, which will be discussed later. For now, the BIG proposal itself will be discussed in more detail.

5. Building the Coalition and Maintaining Social Legitimacy

5.1 Fact Perspective in the Chronology of Key Events

The earlier chapters have presented the members and stakeholders of the BIG Coalition. This chapter discusses the background of the Namibian BIG proposal in detail, and

provides a chronology of the critical events in the development of the organization. The key events in the formation of the coalition are discussed in order to analyze the change that has taken place within the BIG Coalition during the time period under scrutiny. The data in this chapter is analyzed from the “fact perspective” (Alasuutari 1999: 90), where the evidence is discussed critically, but it is primarily assumed to describe the truth. The aim of this chapter is to provide answer to the research question concerning the transformation of the coalition, as well as analyze the reasons behind this change. The chapter begins by brief description of the BIG proposal in South Africa, and thereafter presenting the Namibian proposal including the BIG pilot project in detail.

5.2 BIG Proposal in South Africa

Labour Input and the Taylor Committee

According to Kumiko Makino, the universal BIG was brought up as a policy alternative for South Africa in the Presidential Jobs Summit in October 1998. The National Economic and Labour Council (NEDLAC) presented proposals gathered from its constituencies on South Africa’s job creation and fight for unemployment. The Labour input for this was the BIG proposal. The Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) had proposed a means-tested social assistance scheme earlier, but as the idea of universal grant began to gain support, COSATU mandated “researchers Claudia and Dirk Haarmann - - specifically to look at the option of the universal basic income grant - - To facilitate their research, COSATU set up a reference team including Vivienne Taylor, who would chair the Taylor Committee two years later”. (Makino 2003: 14-15.) According to Neil Coleman, the research was conducted by Dirk and Claudia Haarmann (Coleman 2003: 139) who, as I have already mentioned, later became the key figures in the Namibian BIG Coalition.

The Taylor Committee²⁰, according to Kumiko Makino, was the fifth committee on social security policy reform since the end of the 1980s in South Africa. This Committee, compared to those of earlier ones, comprised of people closer to the labour movement, and of more members, than the earlier ones. For example Ravi Naidoo, the director of National Labour and Economic Development Institute (Naledi), “a labour

think tank” was part of the Taylor Committee. However, it was officially an expert Committee, and Naidoo only represented himself in it. According to Makino, a Cape Town based think tank, EPRI (Economic Policy Research Institute) was commissioned by Taylor Committee to “simulate the social, economic, and fiscal impact of a BIG”. (Makino 2003: 17.)

A slightly different view to the work of the Taylor Committee is provided by Franco Brachiesi. According to him, “economic research, scenarios and stimulations were provided by various individuals and institutes, including labor-friendly Economic Policy Research Institute (EPRI), which had developed the model used for COSATU’s BIG proposal, the National Labour and Economic Development Institute (NALEDI), the National Institute for Economic Policy (NIEP), and researchers Claudia and Dirk Haarmann. Among the international experts - - with the Committee was ILO economist and BIG supporter, Guy Standing.” (Barchiesi 2006: 12.) Pieter le Roux was also one of the Committee members, although he supported more the increase in Value Added Tax (VAT) as a source of funding for the grant (2006: 13). Later, le Roux was a member in the Namtax Consortium, which is claimed to be the initial proponent of basic income in Namibia.²¹

BIG Coalition and the Proposal in South Africa

The South African BIG Coalition was formed in 2001, and it included organizations connected to church, labour, human rights etc. (South African BIG Coalition 2003a.) The members of the South African BIG Coalition included COSATU, The Black Sash (doing the secretarial work for the Coalition), Community Law Centre, and a number of Christian organizations (Makino 2003: 26). Kumiko Makino specifically mentions the work of SACC, as the organization assumed the BIG as the main theme for its Christmas campaign of 2002 (ibid.).

Guy Standing and Michael Samson (2003) have edited a comprehensive book *A basic income grant for South Africa* which discusses the basic income proposal in detail, and follows the lobbying for the grant in the country. It covers the questions of finance and influence to the poverty situation, as well as the requirements for the government to agree on the proposal. The preface for the book is provided by Achibishop Njongonkulu

Ndungane, arguing that The Kingdom [of Heaven] can be achieved by sharing, and that “[t]his book shows a way in which we can make that concrete” (Ndungane 2003: vii). A commentary is provided thereafter by COSATU, introducing the reader to the contents of the book (Vavi 2003: viii-x). However, it is critical towards the chapter written by Heidi Matisonn and Jeremy Seekings, as they see (contrary to the understanding of COSATU) the Democratic Alliance as supporters of BIG (2003: ix). Matisonn and Seekings claim that the proposal might not be the most significant suggestion for improving the situation of the workers, and they are also slightly pessimistic about the prospects of the proposal in South Africa (Matisonn & Seekings 2003: 70-72). To this, Vavi comments: “In the face of parliamentary public hearings - - in which every sector of civil society turned out to endorse the Basic Income Grant, in the light of increasing numbers of newspaper editors - - and in the light of the active mobilization of the Basic Income Grant coalition, pessimism appears to be more political choice than reasoned conclusion” (Vavi 2003: ix). The General Secretary also partly criticizes the chapter by Haroon Borat, because he “spins a perplexing economic analysis that turns reasoned conclusion upside down” (ibid.). The third comment for the book is provided by Sheena Duncan, “Patron of the Black Sash” (Duncan 2003: xi-xii). This comment is also very positive, and demands the South African government make the decision for the realization of the BIG.²²

The commentaries of the book by Standing and Samson reveal the close relationship between the authors and the basic income proposal in South Africa. One of the chapters of the book even discusses the BIG Coalition in South Africa. The representatives of Black Sash, Isobe Frye and Karen Kallmann have written this chapter named *The BIG coalition in South Africa: Making it happen*. Other authors of the book include Claudia Haarmann, Dirk Haarmann, Kenneth MacQuene, Ingrid van Niekerk, Gilbert Khathi, Oliver Babson, Allison Stevens, Pieter le Roux and Neil Coleman, most of them also active members in the South African BIG Coalition.

Government Response to the Proposal in South Africa

A South African opposition party, Democratic Alliance, has proposed its own grant, where the tax threshold would be drawn downwards “so that those who earn more than

R7,500 would pay more in tax than the value grant itself and thus be discouraged from applying for the grant” (Makino 2003: 27). However, COSATU dismissed this proposal as there was no an income tax in place for those earning less than R30,000 per year (2003: 27). The DA proposal caused tensions between the party and the BIG Coalition, which went so far that the DA leader Tony Leon called the attack against the DA as “hysterical” (2003: 28). COSATU claimed that the party took up the proposal of BIG only to gain political support from the black majority in the elections of 2004 (2003: 28). Interestingly, the way to respond to alternative opinions and criticism is similar to that of the Namibian BIG Coalition.

The South African BIG Coalition kept the discussion concerning BIG alive, but the Treasury indicated its negative stand on the proposal. Furthermore, the Minister of Finance – Trevor Manuel, and Joel Netshitenzhe – Government spokesperson, have both, according to Kumiko Makino, spoken against the grant, arguing that people should be encouraged to work instead (Makino 2003: 21). Minister of Social Development, Zola Skweyiya, was more supportive for the idea, but questioned the capacity of the country to implement it (2003: 21). The linkages of COSATU to ANC assisted in keeping the BIG on agenda, but Brachiesi points out that “the outcomes of such discussions revealed a gradual foreclosure of spaces of political possibility for the basic income grant, despite the fact that the proposal was at the center of a resurgent civil society mobilization spurred by the “BIG coalition” started in 2001 with COSATU’s participation” (Frye and Kallmann, 2003, quoted in Barchiesi 2006: 18).

From South Africa to Namibia: Old Wine in New Bottles?

As discussed earlier in this thesis, the South African coalition has several characteristics that are similar to its Namibian counterpart. These include the name, member organizations, structure, and policy recommendations of the coalition²³. However, the activities of the South African Coalition appear to have ceased, as for example the latest update on the coalition homepage has been made in March 2005 (South African BIG Coalition 2005). The similarities between the coalitions are not coincidental, as some of the members of the South African BIG Coalition continue to be active in the Namibian BIG Coalition (compare for example South African BIG Coalition 2003 B and

Haarmann & Haarmann 2005). Dirk and Claudia Haarmann began their work at the DfSD in 2003 (Haarmann & Haarmann 2010).

The idea of BIG has not been actively taken up by the largest party, ANC in South Africa, and the BIG Coalition has ceased to function. How has it been possible then, for such an active coalition to start function in Namibia? Would the new coalition not be turned down by the idea as they saw the BIG Coalition in South Africa to cease to exist? Kumiko Makino understands that the South African BIG Coalition has influenced the debate in Namibia (Makino 2003: 28-29). It seems that the suggestion of BIG in Namibia was not only influenced by its counterpart in South Africa, but that the very same people have been working with the Namibian proposal. In the light of the similarities between the two proposals, it can even be said that the Namibian BIG Coalition has continued the work of the South African Coalition.

5.3 Basics of the Namibian BIG Proposal

A Basic Income Grant (BIG) is a monthly cash grant (e.g. N\$100²⁴) that would be paid by the state to every Namibian citizen regardless of age or income. The money, which is paid to people not in need, is recuperated through the tax system. - Every Namibian would receive such a grant until s/he becomes eligible for a state pension at 60 years. In the case of children aged 17 or younger, the care-giver would receive the grant on behalf of the child.
(Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 13.)

The quote above states the proposal of the Namibian BIG Coalition in a nutshell. The proposal to provide universal income to every citizen and to recuperate it through taxation are the most common features of basic income proposals. There are some elements that are not found from the proposals of a more general nature. These include the suggestion on the amount of the grant, restriction of the grant to citizens less than 60 years of age, and providing the grant to the care-giver on behalf of a child.²⁵

According to the BIG Coalition, the reasons for introducing the BIG in Namibia, is to reduce poverty. Especially the reduction of the high level of inequality is of importance. The grant would be provided without a means-test, as the “classic welfare programmes using a means-test to target beneficiaries have been proven to be more expensive,

wasteful and also ineffective to target people and to limit social assistances to specific groups and people. If targeting is applied by means of added administrative requirements – the poorest are actually those who are least likely to get benefit from the programmes, as they by nature are the most disadvantaged in terms of access to information, infrastructure, and administrative services provided” (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 14). Furthermore, Dirk and Claudia Haarmann argue that although the rich would receive the grant, they would pay more in taxation and therefore become net payers of the grant. In this way, certain group of people would not be labeled as poor, as “social assistance becomes a right”²⁶. (2005: 14.)

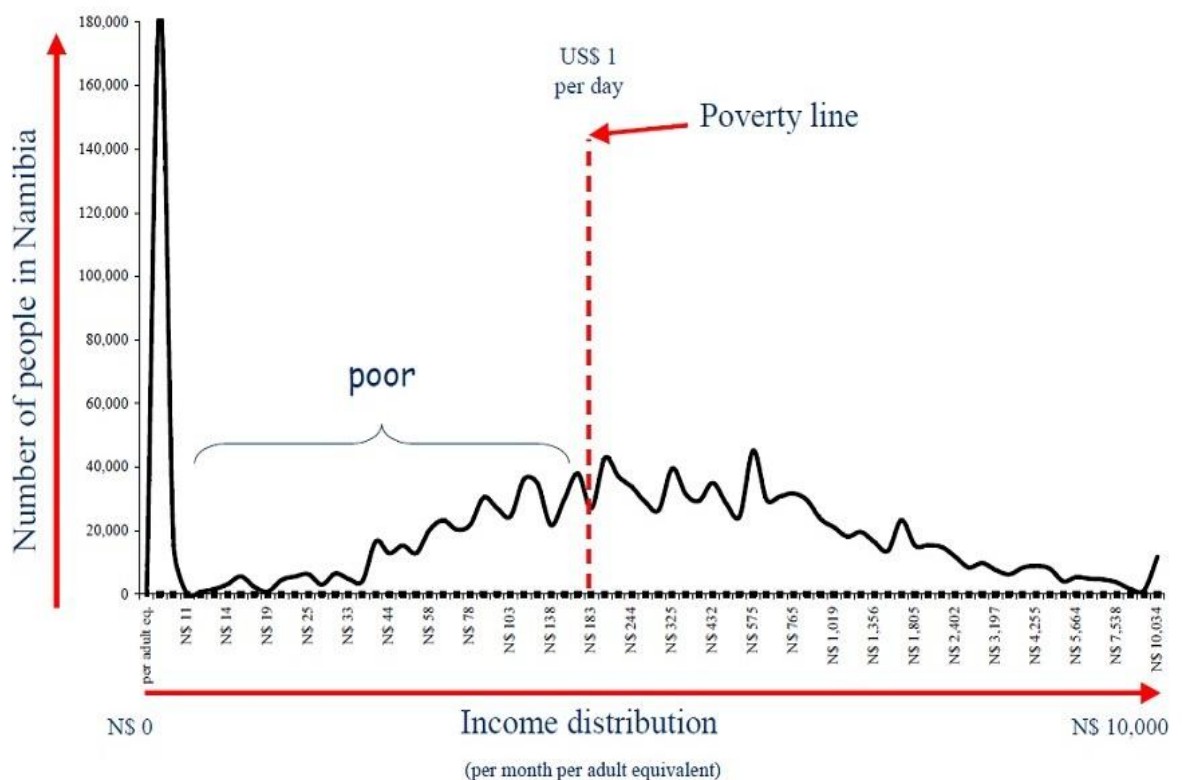
The coalition mentions certain disadvantages of the BIG, such as the “initial costs and the setting up of the delivery system”. After this, according to the coalition, the costs would go down, and the grant would most probably be stimulating economic growth. The coalition also responds to a question on how it is possible to “prevent people from wasting the grant on alcohol, lottery tickets, etc.?” The answer is simply: You cannot. However, it is reminded that “poor people cannot afford to waste their money and the majority of people use their money responsibly and wisely – the people themselves know what they need most”. (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 15-16.) This is perhaps the most central point of the argument for the BIG: the grant should be in cash, because the people know themselves, what is it that they most urgently need.

Another argument against the BIG, according to the coalition, is dependency. However, the coalition reminds that “poor people are dependent on assistance from other people - - A BIG gives people an income source of their own, which they can count on and which enables them to take their own decisions.” (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 16.) As people would no longer be dependent on their relatives or friends on income, the grant would actually reduce dependency, and release resources for investments. Furthermore, BIG would be something people can trust on as a reliable source of income, and therefore it would be possible for them to plan more of their economic activities. (2005: 16.)

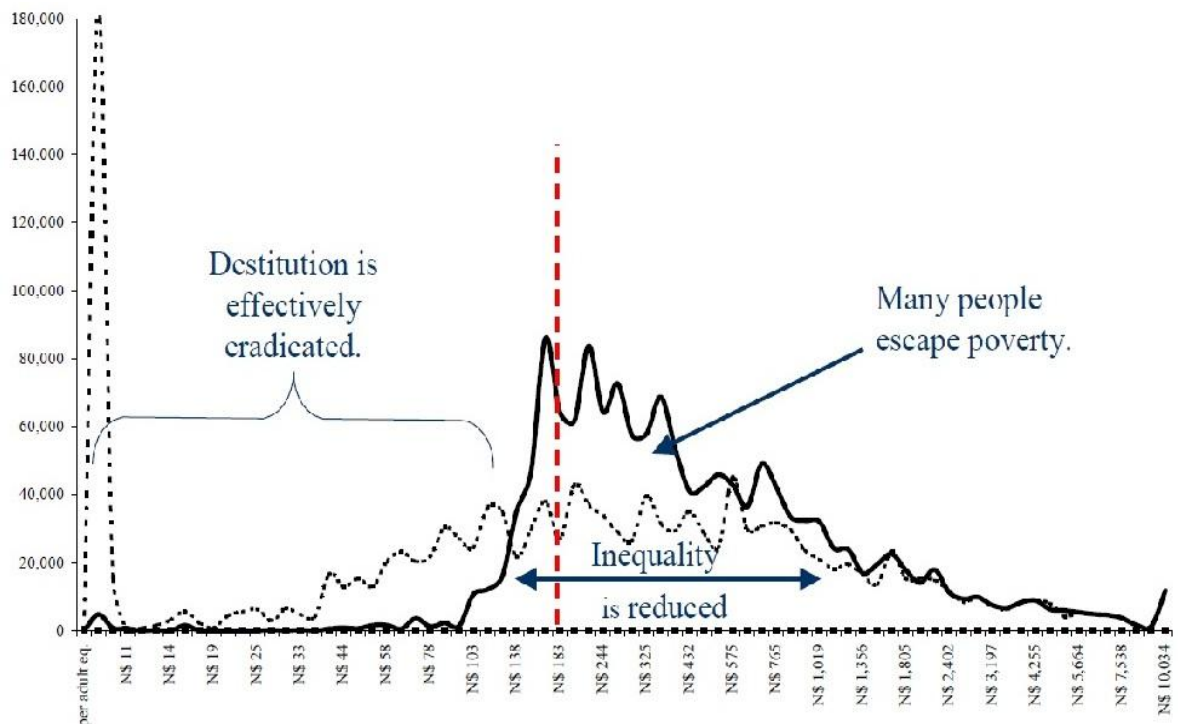
According to the BIG Coalition, the basic income would contribute to three developmental aspects of the society. First, it would assist in meeting the basic needs

such as nutrition and housing. Secondly, it would contribute to the “capability” of the people, as they would be able to realize their full potential in several aspects of their lives²⁷. Thirdly, it would provide people the “freedom of choice, security and power to take ownership. (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 39) The main thesis of the coalition is that the BIG would offer a solution to the poverty and inequality problem in Namibia.

According to the BIG Resource Book, the basic income grant would immediately change the income distribution trend in Namibia. This is illustrated by two figures presented below. The change of income seems dramatic, and it indeed is, compared with the crude poverty line of US\$1 per day. However, this is hardly surprising, as the people are assumed to receive the additional N\$100 per month. Although the second figure states that “Inequality is reduced,” only the increased income for the poor is taken into consideration. In case the BIG would be funded through taxation on the groups with highest income, the curve might look different. However, this is only *might*, as the pictures do not show the amount of people receiving incomes exceeding N\$10,034 per month.



Picture 1: Current income distribution in Namibia (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 36)



Picture 2: “The impact of a BIG on Namibia’s income distribution compared to the current income distribution (dotted line) – Source: DfSD Microsimulation Model” (2005: 38)

Michael Samson and Ingrid van Niekerk have written the fifth section of *The Basic Income Grant in Namibia, Resource Book*. Both of them have been involved with the basic income grant proposal in South Africa (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 48). The fifth part of the booklet discusses briefly the financial aspect of the basic income proposal in Namibia. According to Samson and van Niekerk (2005: 44), the population of Namibia in 1999 was estimated to be 1,7 million people, with the population growth rate of 1,5% per year. The estimated population size for 2004 is not mentioned in the paper, but a simple calculation assists: Assuming the growth rate of 1,5% per year, the estimated size of the population of Namibia in 2004 would be 1,751382.5, which means roughly 1,75 million. As the grant would not be provided to those eligible for the state pension, the percentage of the population receiving the grant would be 93.1 (1,630,537 people). This means, according to Samson and van Niekerk (2005: 45) that the net cost would range from N\$0.8 to N\$1.4 billion per year depending on how the grant would be financed.²⁸

The basic idea behind the proposal has now been discussed. The following part will present the introduction of the BIG proposal in Namibia in more detail. It is important

to keep in mind the background of South African BIG proposal, as this part begins by introducing the “official truth,” the introduction of the basic income proposal by the Namtax Consortium.

5.4 Critical Events in Introducing the BIG Proposal in Namibia

This chapter takes a closer look to the events that led to the formation of the Namibian BIG Coalition. Newspaper articles, interviews, and background material, form the data of this chapter. According to the BIG Coalition, the basic income grant proposal was originally brought up in Namibia since 2002 as a government-based Namibian Tax Consortium proposed basic income among other suggestions in order to enhance the redistributive effects of the Namibian tax system (Namibian Tax Consortium 2002: 16). This suggestion was taken forward by the Desk for Social Development (DfSD) of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia, proposing an increase in taxation in order to fund a monthly basic income of N\$100 to every Namibian less than 60 years of age (The Namibian 2004).

This was followed by lobbying the Namibian government (Graig 2004, Isaacs 2006a and b) and launching the Basic Income Grant Coalition comprising of churches, NGOs and trade unions (Shigwedha 2005). The idea was discussed in the Namibian media every now and then (see for example Nyambe 2005, Lister 2005, Widlok 2005 and Gaomab 2006) until the BIG Coalition announced it is looking for an area to conduct a Pilot Project for basic income (Isaacs 2007a and b). According to Dirk Haarmann “It’s basically to get a concrete example of how the BIG can work, which we can show Government” (Isaacs 2007a). A small village called Omitara/Otjivero, some hundred kilometers east of the capital city Windhoek, was chosen for the BIG Pilot Project for the time period of 2008-2009 (Isaacs 2008a).

Basic Income and the Namibian Tax Consortium

The Namibian BIG Coalition refers to the Namibian Tax Consortium as the initial proponent of the basic income (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 19-29). This Consortium was requested to conduct a comprehensive review on tax legislation in 2001 (The Namibian Tax Consortium 2002: 8). The project was funded by the Swedish

International Development Authority (SIDA) and by the Government of Namibia (2002: 8). The consultants represented the University of Namibia and a private sector company Tax Consulting Services Namibia (Pty) Ltd, and included two Swedish experts (2002: 8). One member of this Consortium was Pieter le Roux, member of the Taylor Commission mentioned above.

One of the seven specific terms of reference for the Consortium requested for “Addressing the issue of the redistribution of income” (The Namibian Tax Consortium 2002: 9). The Consortium concluded with eighteen recommendations and implementation dates for the terms of reference (2002: 6-7). Three of these were not applicable at the specific moment, and fourteen were recommended to be conducted between the years of 2003 and 2006 (ibid.). However the income grant proposal was not given a specific due date, but the proposal was recommended to be conducted in “Medium Term” (ibid.). Against this background, it is quite interesting to see, how one of these eighteen recommendations of the Tax Review received such a strong response from the civil society organizations.

Formation of the Namibian BIG Coalition

Two years after the proposal of Namibian Tax Consortium, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN) drew together a seminar “Strengthening income security in Namibia; Poverty, HIV/AIDS and the need for a basic income grant”. Peter le Roux “from the University of the Western Cape” attended the seminar, as well as Bishop Zephaniah Kameeta. Both of them spoke positively about the basic income proposal, while the Institute for Public Policy and Research (IPPR) representative Robin Sherbourne was a bit more cautious. ELCRN had decided to “work with the Government to further investigate and implement the proposal”. (Tjaronda 2004a.) The Desk for Social Development of the ELCRN provided a background document for the seminar, outlining the principles of the proposal (Nampa 2004). The participants of the seminar announced that they had formed “a 10- member committee which will drive the formation of a Coalition on BIG” (Tjaronda 2004b).

Around the same time, New Era published a story stating that “Politicians [are] Split On BIG Issue” (Tjaronda 2004c). While Congress of Democrats (Cod) and DTA had

announced their support to the idea, the representatives of the Republican Party and Nudo were more cautious. Swapo Party was at that time commenting positively on the proposal, but still keeping a cautious voice: “- - under the current economic circumstances, the party could not commit itself to introducing the grant” New Era reported (2004a).

Following the seminar organized in 2004, both New Era and the Namibian reported in April 2005 that the BIG Coalition had been formed (Shigwedha 2005 and Tjaronda 2005). Bishop Kameeta from ELCRN, Peter Naholo from NUNW, and the representative of NANGOF commented on the proposal (Tjaronda 2005). This was followed by a debate in the newspapers, where for example the outspoken chief editor of the Namibian, Gwen Lister stated that basic income should not be paid to every citizen, but that it “should be targeted at those who don’t have access to a basic income in the first place” (Lister 2005).

The first official publication of the BIG Coalition was brought into publicity in September 2005 in the meeting with the speaker of the National Assembly, Theo-Ben Gurirab, who “assured the coalition that Government was just as concerned about social welfare as civil society” (Isaacs 2005a). The publication was called *The Basic Income Grant in Namibia, Resource Book* (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005), and it was presented by Reverend Phillip Strydom, General Secretary of the CCN (Isaacs 2005a). New Era also reported on the meeting, referring to the “Church Group,” a delegation promoting BIG (Philander 2005). The coalition responded to this 17 October in a polite way, correcting that the delegation meeting Gurirab was not a “church group” but “represented the entire BIG Coalition, which is a broad-based coalition” (BIG Coalition 2005). This response indicates that the coalition is quite sensitive concerning how it is described in public, although in this case the response was very polite. However this reaction might give a hint on what might be the response to other perceived flaws concerning the articles concerning basic income.

Discussions with Government and Persisting on the Proposal

The year 2006 was time for lobbying for the BIG in the Namibian government, as well as responding to the first critical perspective on the proposal. Both The Namibian and

New Era reported on the meeting with the President Hifikepunye Pohamba, where “Bishop Zephania Kameeta, BIG coordinator Reverend Philip (sic) Strydom, Legal Assistance Centre (LAC) Director Norman Tjombe and academic researcher Reverend Dirk Haarman (sic)” presented the idea (Isaacs 2006a). The result of this meeting, according to Kameeta, was that the President promised to take up the issue with the Cabinet, but did not commit himself to the realization of the proposal (Isaacs 2006a, Tjaronda 2006a).

The Cabinet, however, made a clear rejection of the proposal in May 2005, when Prime Minister Nahas Angula made a statement on behalf of the Cabinet. The reason for this was that “introducing such a grant would make no economical sense” (Isaacs 2006b). Furthermore, “Angula said if the BIG was indeed believed to be a priority, Government would need to abolish its existing subsidies and grants to make money available” (2006b). However, Angula proposed to the representatives of the Coaliton, that they could raise part of the funds themselves, and government could then employ people to assist (2006b). This led Bishop Kameeta to state that the BIG Coalition did not regard the rejection as total, and that they would need to discuss the way forward within the coalition (2006b). The meeting was reported by the national TV-station, Namibian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC), which had not been the intention of the coalition. When the rejection of the proposal had leaked to the public, Bishop Kameeta took a clear stand on judging the news report concerning the meeting not aimed for the public (Isaacs, 2006c). According to him, the report did not correctly represent the ideas provided by the coalition (2006e). After these events, New Era reported that “Govt Vetoes BIG – For Now” (Sibeene 2006).

In August 2006 the BIG Coalition made headlines such as “BIG is back,” “Coalition Persists on BIG,” and “BIG stands its ground” (Isaacs 2006d and e, Tjaronda 2006b). These were the result of a workshop organized by the BIG Coalition, called “Church and Society”. Dirk Haarmann, Zephania Kameeta, and Phillip Strydom were the spokespersons for the coalition in these articles. Towards the end of the year, the representatives of the BIG Coalition participated in the 11th Basic Income Earth Network Congress. Bishop Kameeta was one of the participants, stating, according to the Namibian, that the opponents of the proposal did not have the understanding of the

concept, “or they despise the poor” (Isaacs 2006f). Zola Skweyiya, Minister for Social Development in South Africa, came out shortly thereafter as a supporter of the grant (ibid.).

Towards the end of 2006, BIG Coalition awoke to the criticism of the International Monetary Fund (IMF). This discussion will be followed more closely in the later chapter of this thesis. However, this was the first situation where the coalition came out very aggressively defending the proposal of the basic income, and it is therefore one of the key elements in the development of the situation.

Heyday of the BIG Proposal

The year 2007 was very busy for the BIG Coalition. At the beginning of the year, the representatives of ELCRN and LaRRI presented their paper to the United Nations Commission for Social Development, former Prime Minister Hage Geingob stepped out as a supporter of the grant, and the coalition announced its plan to implement the grant scheme in one of the villages of Namibia. In 2007, 19 newspaper articles directly discussing the BIG proposal were published in the English-speaking newspapers of Namibia. Furthermore additional 14 articles mentioned the BIG in one way or another.

As mentioned previously, the Basic Income Grant proposal was taken up by the representatives of the BIG Coalition in the presentation to the United Nations Commission for Social Development, 45th session, 7-16 February 2007. This “research paper” is written by “Bishop Dr. Z. Kameeta, Dr. Claudia Haarmann, Dr. Dirk Haarmann, and Herbert Jauch”²⁹. It has been published in Windhoek, but the publisher name is not mentioned. The paper draws a conclusion in “Section 4: Towards a good practice model,” where the Basic Income Grant proposal is introduced in detail (Kameeta et al 2007).

The United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division For Social Policy and Development homepage states following: “The forty-fifth session focused on **employment, ageing, disability and youth**. - - The Commission adopted, by consensus, key resolutions urging greater attention to the needs of youth and elderly persons as countries pursued national social policy and wider development goals”

(emphasis by author, United Nations 2007a). No reference is made to the basic income proposal. The forty-nine page Final Report on the Forty-Fifth Session mentions basic income, once: Annex I of the report provides a twenty-five point summary by the Chairperson on the discussions on the theme “Promoting full employment and decent work for all” (United Nations 2007b: 33-37). Point 24 mentions Brazil’s bolsa familia grant, and thereafter states following: “A recent proposal for a basic income grant for all has emerged as a good practice model for alleviating poverty and empowering the poor to improve their livelihoods. Under that proposal, a monthly cash grant would be issued to each citizen up to pensionable age” (2007b: 37). Thereafter, point 24 mentions “a national rural employment guarantee programme” (2007b: 37). This means the basic income proposal made it to one of the twenty-five discussion points, and in that point, sharing the discussion with two other proposals on social security. In this light, the Namibian response, seems way too eager: “UN agency impressed with Nam BIG” announced the Namibian (Isaacs 2007b) and New Era stated that “UN Commends BIG Proposals” (Tjaronda 2007b).

The BIG proposal was gaining support in Namibian forums. On 14 February the Namibian reported “BIG Coalition goes it alone,” and described the presentation, and the idea of the pilot project presented by Dirk Haarmann (Isaacs 2007a). New Era announced: “Coalition to Experiment with BIG” (Tjaronda 2007a). Former Prime Minister, Hage Geingob stepped out as a supporter of BIG in March (Weidlich 2007). He stated in front of Parliament, that poverty was a serious problem in Namibia, and that the introduction of BIG should be considered (2007). Hage Geingob also became the first one taking up the challenge to contribute to the BIG experiment, in August 2007 (Isaacs 2007d).

August 2007 was also the first time for the official announcement of the BIG Pilot Project ground, and thereafter the actual project was prepared for. The Namibian and New Era announced: “BIG to go big on BIG!” (Isaacs 2007c), “BIG Pilot Project On its Wheels” (Philander 2007), “BIG Launched” (Tjaronda 2007c), “Omitara goes BIG” (Isaacs 2007d), “BIG Takes Off” (New Era 2007), “Eewa – The BIG Lifeline” (Tjaronda 2007d), Women Left with No Income (Tjaronda 2007e)³⁰ and “Residents who Pin their Hopes on Big” (Tjaronda 2007f) – all this only in August 2007. One

critical opinion was also published at that time in the Namibian, titled “Opposed To ‘Free Money’” (Hangula 2007). The German-speaking newspaper published a pledge written by Claudia and Dirk Haarmann requesting for donations for the project (Haarmann & Haarmann 2007), while the English-speaking ones published more detailed articles on the set-up of the project.

The BIG Pilot Project was certainly the culmination point in the work of the BIG Coalition. It received international interest – at least to certain extent – and was closely followed in the English- and German-speaking newspapers³¹. The following part of this chapter will present the set-up of the pilot project, and thereafter the major events during the two-year project with regard to the work of the BIG Coalition will be discussed.

BIG Pilot Project



Picture 3: Otjivero village in May 2008

Omitara/Otjivero settlement is located just by the border of Omaheke and Khomas regions (NPC 2006: 11). As the formal village of Omitara is in the Omaheke region in the area of Steinhausen, the informal settlement area of Otjivero is also connected to this region. Omaheke region is located in the eastern part of Namibia, bordering the Republic of Botswana in the east. According to the Regional Poverty Profile, the thick layers of Kalahari sediments make the mining efforts practically impossible, and therefore there are no major mining activities in the area. The nearby Otjivero dam is

one of the three supplies of water to the only municipality of the area, Gobabis. The life expectancy at birth for females is 66 years, and for males 64. Roughly quarter of the population live in urban settlements, concentrated in Gobabis. Roughly 77 per cent of the population speaks one of the three major languages in the area: Otjiherero, Nama/Damara or Afrikaans, leaving the largest language group of Namibia, Oshiwambo-speakers, sixth. The region of Omaheke consists of 68 039 inhabitants, the area of Steinhausen accommodating 9600 inhabitants. This would mean that roughly one tenth of the population in Steinhausen area lives in the village of Omitara. (NPC 2006: 21-24)

The overall look of the village is a bit dirty, and poor. There are some brick houses, but the majority of houses are made of corrugated iron sheets and plastic covers. One could see an increase in brick houses between 2008 and 2009. However, the overall image of the village did not change much during one year. According to my queries, people live out of small livestock and by selling homemade products such as home-brewed beer, fatcakes, and roasted meat. A number of people also get pensions, and in this way assist the whole family. Although the village is said to be poor, some basic services are available for the citizens. These include primary school, clinic, police station, shop, and a post office. Clean water is also available in public taps located around the village, as the nearby Otjivero dam provides water. (Omitara 31.5.2008)

The Basic Income Grant Coalition launched Basic Income Grant Pilot Project in Otjivero/Omitara in January 2008 (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2008: 9). As mentioned before, the official aim of the project was to show that it indeed is possible to provide BIG for the citizens. The N\$100 grant was provided to 930 residents, all of them below the age of 60 years. The grant was provided to the care-giver of the children below the age of 21. The official intention of the coalition was to “monitor and evaluate the effects of BIG on individuals living in the area and on the community overall”. This was to be conducted openly, and “the evidence would be made available to the Namibian Government, all Namibians and the international audience, so that objective analysis could be conducted and policy decisions taken on the basis of real empirical data. This was the commitment made by the BIG Coalition”. (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2008a: 15-17.) Appendix 3 presents the “proof of registration” – form

provided to the inhabitants of the village as they registered to the BIG Coalition. In July 2008, a smart-card system for the payment of the grant was introduced (Omitara 20.6.2009).



Picture 4: Smart Card for the payment of BIG

People living in the village viewed the BIG very positively. Some suggested the grant should be larger, and some openly admitted that there are people who have misuses the money. The grant has however assisted people in receiving their daily meals, and school attendance had increased. The interviewees could rarely specify how they thought the funds should be collected for the BIG. In 2008 people were very open and ready to discuss the grant. (Omitara 31.5, 9.-13.6.2008) This had changed, as I went to visit the village again in 2009. Some people were still very open and willing to share their thoughts on the matter, but others refused to discuss the BIG on the grounds that we were not authorized by the coalition to discuss the influence of BIG. A lady in her twenties mentioned even that we should have not been allowed to walk around the village by ourselves. She mentioned that people coming to the village should always be accompanied by somebody from the village Committee (such as herself), so that they could make sure people would not be saying wrong things concerning the grant. (Omitara 20.6.2009.)

Project Begins – an Instant Success?

In November 2007 the BIG Coalition announced it was prepared to begin the BIG project in January. New Era reported: “BIG Welcome Relief for Otjivero Community” (sic) (Tjaronda 2007a) and the Namibian “Omitara goes BIG” (Isaacs 2008a). After the

first payout day New Era reported “BIG Payout Exercise a Success” (Tjaronda 2008b) and “BIG Coalition Disburses Grants” (Tjaronda 2008a). However, this was not the opinion of all. According to the shop owner, during the first and second payout day crimes were reported, even a killing in one of the shebeens³² of the village (Omitara 13.6.2008b). The shop owner of the village came out in criticizing the behavior of the people, and the grant, and Bishop Kameeta in turn decided this opinion was only related to his business interest (Isaacs 2008c). This viewpoint was affirmed by Dirk Haarmann, when I met him in the payout day of May 2008 in Omitara (Omitara 16.6.2008).

The first results of the project were published in September 2008 and a study was officially conducted by DfSD and LaRRI. “BIG a big success at Omitara,” the Namibian announced (Isaacs 2008d) whereas New Era was more moderate: “BIG Coalition Assesses Impact of N\$100 Grant” (Tjaronda 2008c). This report, named “Towards a Basic Income Grant for all!” introduces the beginning of the project, and the background of the proposal. Stories of selected people from Omitara are presented. The methodology and the findings are also shortly presented.

In the report, Section 1.4, Methodology states the following: “The BIG Coalition committed itself to carefully evaluating the pilot project in order to assess the impact of the BIG and to be able to guide national policy-makers” (BIG Coalition 2008a : 20). The coalition mentions that the survey of other areas should have been ideal for the research, but “this is not only statistically very difficult, given the particular features of Otjivero-Omitara but also ethically problematic” (2008a: 20). This is not elaborated further, so one is left to wonder how the results of the study should be interpreted if the village has “particular features” and cannot therefore be compared with other Namibian villages. The coalition has, according to the booklet, used four types of research methods on collecting the data from the village: a baseline study was conducted in November 2007, a panel survey had been conducted in July 2008, information from key informants was gathered, and a set of case studies were used (2008a: 21). The results included the dropping of child malnutrition rate, rising employment, increase in household income – in addition to the BIG – increase in the payment of school fees, increase in the payment of clinic fees, empowering young women and decreasing the

rate of transactional sex, reducing economic and poverty related crime rates, and helping to progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. (2008a: 10-11).

The report does not provide more detailed information on any of the outcomes of the project, and they were not available elsewhere either. This raises certain questions, as it would be interesting to know for example, how the rate of transactional sex is measured. The publication of this report was followed by the criticism from Namibian Economic Policy Research UNIT (NEPRU) towards the results of the research. This caused a panic-like response from the coalition, and will be discussed later in more detail. The continuation of the pilot project, publication of the first report, and the public discussion after that were the key events in the progress of the work of the BIG Coalition in 2008.

Towards the End

The election year 2009 should have been the year when the government of Namibia takes the final decision to introduce the BIG in the country. This was not the case, but the coalition made efforts to convince the government about the feasibility of the grant. The coalition wrote a letter to the Namibian 7 August 2009 with the heading “A BIG Grant for Little People” (BIG Coalition 2009). Bishop Kameeta also appealed to the government, claiming that “Poverty in Namibia is a scandal” (Shejavali 2009a). The coalition also organized at least one lobbying workshop, mentioned above, for the representatives of the civil society.

The elections of 2009 went as expected, and the government did not commit itself to the introduction of BIG. During the last months of the BIG pilot project, the coalition decided to continue the payment of the grant at Omitara in 2009. This payment was called a “bridging allowance” (Shejavali 2009b). This was to be provided to the people in the village, as the BIG Coalition officially expected the government to still implement the grant scheme during the following years (2009b). At the end of 2009, the coalition circulated pictures drawn by the schoolchildren of Otjivero, presenting the impact of the BIG to the lives of their families. In August 2010, the final report of the pilot project remained yet to be published, although the homepage of the coalition had changed the name of the 2009 report to Final Report.

5.5 Conclusion: Transformation of the Coalition

In this chapter I have argued, that the Namibian BIG Coalition has continued the work of its South African counterpart. However, the Desk for Social Development of ELCRN claim the proposal has been brought up by Namibian Tax Consortium, which indeed recommended BIG – in one of its eighteen recommendations. The BIG Coalition was taken up by DfSD, and the proposal was discussed in the Namibian media. However, the government did not support the proposal, and the BIG Coalition sought for support elsewhere. After presenting the idea of BIG in a UN meeting, it announced the launch of BIG pilot project, which was conducted in Omitara during the years 2008 and 2009.

The basic income grant proposal has been the very same throughout the years, but the role of the BIG Coalition in Namibia has changed. First it was a network of organizations, which supported the idea of basic income. Gradually the idea of piloting the proposal in one of the Namibian villages was presented, and finally the BIG Coalition launched the project, and in this way became an organization for development cooperation, which simultaneously claims to do research concerning the project. The aim was not, however, to bring development to Omitara as such, but to show that the basic income would have such a positive outcome, that the government would be pressed to implement it on a national level.

The Namibian public, including the press, has been positive towards the BIG proposal as well as towards the pilot project experiment. The people living in Omitara have also perceived the grant as a valuable and positive thing. Unfortunately, the results of this pilot project are very difficult to analyze, as the booklets published by the BIG Coalition do not provide detailed information on the research, but rely on the stories of the individual citizens of the village. At the end of the pilot project, the proposal had not gained wide support among the politicians of the country. Instead, one of the counter-arguments for the BIG Proposal has indeed been pronounced by the Prime minister, Nahas Angula. This will be discussed in the next chapter as the clashes with the environment are analyzed in detail.

6. Coalition and Clashes with the Environment

6.1 Legitimacy of the Basic Income Grant Coalition

This chapter takes a look at the legitimate actors in the BIG Coalition. The chapter is divided into two interlinked parts. The first one analyzes the relations within the coalition by looking for those who announce the opinions in public. The second part looks at the clashes between the BIG Coalition and its environment. The theory of resource dependence will be used as the social legitimacy of the coalition is discussed in relation to its environment. *Social legitimacy as a resource* is the most important concept in this chapter, as the first part looks into who are those who search for this legitimacy, and the second part analyzes the responses to the questioning of the social legitimacy. The newspaper articles collected for this research provide a valuable perspective to the analysis. The articles collected mostly from newspapers *The Namibian* and *New Era* for the time period between 2004 and 2009 will be analyzed. The interviews and publications of the BIG Coalition, as well as observations will also assist in the analysis.

Social Legitimacy as a Resource

The theory of resource dependence and the concept of social legitimacy have been presented above. The idea in this part of the thesis is to use the concept of social legitimacy in the concept of resource dependence theory initially described by Pfeffer and Salancik (1978). Lewis (2007) connects their thoughts to NGO research, as they emphasize the influence of the environment in the work of different types of organizations. As mentioned in the introductory chapters, Hatch and Cunliffe (2006) present the term social legitimacy, an addition of the institutional perspective to resource dependence theory. So, the term social legitimacy will be borrowed from the symbolic-interpretive background of institutionalism, and combined with the theory of resource dependence. An important element in the analysis is the identification of these resources, and tracing them (Hatch and Cunliffe 2006: 80-83). This study argues that the search for **social legitimacy** (as a resource) influences the internal work of the BIG

Coalition. Therefore it is important to find out how this legitimacy is searched for, and who is searching for it.

The concept of legitimacy has two connotations in this context. The first one is social legitimacy as a resource. The relationship of the coalition with the surrounding environment defines the social legitimacy of the coalition in the context of the general environment. This environment has essentially three dimensions: one is the Namibian society, the second one is the pilot project village, and the third one is the international environment. The second connotation reflects the positions of the central personalities of the coalition – of those who have gained the legitimacy inside the organization and are therefore the ones to seek for social legitimacy from the environment.

To my understanding, social legitimacy in the context of the BIG Coalition refers to something the coalition cannot function without, and something it needs to gain in different ways. Social legitimacy in Namibia means that the work of the organization is understood as legitimate, and therefore the claims made by it are also legitimate. Social legitimacy is a resource that might be gained from one part of the environment, but it is far more challenging to gain it from the whole interorganizational network. The second part of this chapter looks into those situations where the legitimacy is questioned, while the first part looks into the inner dynamics of the coalition, and searches for those who are allowed to seek social legitimacy for the coalition.

Between 2004 and 2009 *The Namibian* and *New Era* newspapers published 99 articles discussing the BIG proposal in Namibia. None of them questioned the legitimacy of the BIG Coalition, although some critical perspectives were published as well. As the coalition has strong social legitimacy in the Namibian press, it is interesting to see, how it responds to criticism. The four cases discussing the critique towards the work of the BIG Coalition are interesting in a way that the coalition has responded to them in related, but different ways. It will be argued that the coalition is very sensitive concerning any criticism aimed at the proposal and that this is due to the perceived threat to the social legitimacy of the coalition in Namibia, and perhaps even on an international level. The newspaper articles are used here as the main source of information; interviews, coalition publications and other material support this data.

In Search for the Legitimate Spokespeople

This section concentrates on the representatives of the BIG Coalition. The title asks: Who formulates the opinions? I suggest that the spokespersons of the coalition do have more power in the opinion-building than those who do not speak about the pilot project in public. This provides a perspective to the internal hierarchy of the organization, where not every member the coalition is considered as a legitimate spokesperson.

Spokespersons in the Newspapers

According to the newspaper articles published in Namibian newspapers between 2004 and May 2010 concerning the Basic Income Grant proposal and the coalition, mostly three people have spoken on behalf of the BIG Coalition. ELCRN Bishop Zephaniah Kameeta is the most visible spokesperson of the coalition, and he also chairs it (Tjaronda 2009b and !Hoases 2009a) as well as is the President of the CCN in 2009 (!Hoases 2009a). He spoke in the newspapers on behalf of the coalition 28 times during the time period under scrutiny. Reverend of the ELCRN, and the representative of the DfSD, Dirk Haarmann, spoke on behalf of the BIG Coalition in the Namibian newspapers 16 times during 2004-2010. The third most-outspoken person comes from the Labour Resource and Research Institute, LaRRI. He is Herbert Jauch, who spoke on behalf of the coalition 13 times during the time period. Reverend Claudia Haarmann, also from the ELCRN and DfSD, and CCN Reverend Phillip Strydom have spoken eight and six times respectively. Other coalition members have not been this active: NANASO, NUNW and LAC have clearly been the most silent organizations in the BIG Coalition, only promoting the BIG in the newspapers once or twice at most. Uhuru Dempers from Nangof Trust have been a bit more active with the most recent organization joining the coalition, National Youth Council, but their contributions in the newspapers are less than five each.

From the perspective above, one could draw a conclusion that the church organizations do have a vital role in the coalition. However, this is not the message the spokespeople wish to convey. This became clear from the above mentioned response to the article of Philander, when he referred to “Church Group” instead of BIG Coalition. It is, of course possible, that the public spokespersons have been decided upon by making a democratic

choice, and the others, not so eager to stand out in public, would be happy to work in the other fields of the BIG Coalition. However, this study proposes that the same people who are working actively with the public also work in the pilot project, not leaving much space for those who are not active in the public.

People Behind the Publications

The Basic Income Grant Coalition has provided one larger booklet concerning the basic income proposal; smaller “Information Brochure” in English, Afrikaans, Nama-Damara, Oshiwambo, Otjiherero and Silozi; and “Research Reports” from Omitara/Otjivero study. A “Research Paper” concerning employment named “*Promoting employment and decent work for all – Towards a good practice model in Namibia*” was a Presentation to the United Nations Commission for Social Development 7-16 February 2007, by Bishop Kameeta (Kameeta et al 2007). The booklet draws a conclusion proposing the basic income: “The BIG, while being administratively simple and just, would not only reduce poverty, but also avail resources necessary for the poor to successfully enter into employment or self-employment” (2007: 25). The authors of this paper include Zephaniah Kameeta, Claudia Haarmann, Dirk Haarmann, and Herbert Jauch. The publisher of the booklet is not mentioned.

The Basic Income Grant in Namibia – Resource Book, provides the basic background information concerning the basic income proposal in the country (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005). It is edited by Claudia and Dirk Haarmann. The first section of the booklet includes speeches held in the launch of the Basic Income Grant Coalition 27 April 2005 by Zephaniah Kameeta representing ELCRN and CCN, Peter Naholo representing NUNW, and Sandi Tjaronda representing NANGOF. The author of the section two is not mentioned. The authors of the section three: “How it all started – Government’s Namtax commission” are not mentioned either. However, this is presumably the appendix to the initial document provided by the Namtax consortium as it states following: “This appendix contains the Consortium’s tax proposal to address the serious problem of poverty and income inequality in Namibia” (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 19). Section four is written by Claudia and Dirk Haarmann. It also provides some background on the authors: “They are pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the Republic of Namibia (ELCRN) and are currently working as the

Project Directors of the Desk for Social Development (DfSD-ELCRN). Both hold a PhD in Social Development from the Institute for Social Development (UWC, South Africa) and a Masters in Theology (Germany).” (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 42.) Finally, the fifth section is written by “Prof. Dr. Michael Samson and Ms. Ingrid van Niekerk. Dr. Samson is the Director of the Economic Policy Research Institute in South Africa (EPRI) - - Ms van Niekerk is a Co-Director of EPRI. Both have done extensive work on the Basic Income Grant in South Africa et al. for the Cabinet appointed Taylor Commission.” (Haarmann & Haarmann 2005: 48.)

Interestingly, it is not mentioned that like Michael Samson and Ingrid van Niekerk, both Claudia and Dirk Haarmann have also done “extensive work on the Basic Income Grant in South Africa”. For example, the Basic Income Coalition of South Africa (2003) provides a *Background Briefing on the Basic Income Grant*, where additional information concerning the economical aspect of the basic income can be attained from Dr. Claudia Haarmann, Dr. Dirk Haarmann, and Prof. Michael Samson (2003: 5). Both have also participated on the work of so-called Taylor Committee, or Committee of Inquiry for Comprehensive Social Security, as the researchers of both EPRI and Institute for Social Development, UWC (EPRI 2001).

“*Towards a Basic Income Grant for all!*” is the first report of the Basic Income Grant pilot project presented to the public. It was published in September 2008, and the first page reveals the authors of the report: Claudia Haarmann, Dirk Haarmann, Herbert Jauch, Hilma Shindondola-Mote (director of LaRRI), Nicoli Nattrass (Director of the AIDS and Society Research Unit and Professor in the School of Economics, University of Cape Town, South Africa), Michael Samson (Economic Policy Research Unit EPRI, South Africa; Professor at Williams College, USA) and Guy Standing (Professor of Economic Security, University of Bath, UK; Professor of Labour Economics, Monash University, Australia) (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2008a: VII). The three last names refer to the “International Advisory Group,” which includes one more academic, Dr. Godfrey Kanyenze who is the Director of the Labour and Economic Development Research Institute of Zimbabwe (LEDRI) (2008a: VII). The second booklet *Making the difference! The BIG in Namibia* is written by Claudia Haarmann, Dirk Haarmann,

Herbert Jauch, Hilma Shindondola-Mote, Nicoli Nattrass, Ingrid van Niekerk and Michael Samson (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2009).

Spokespersons of the Interviews

The newspaper articles and the publications of the coalition have provided some suggestions on who are the most active people in the BIG Coalition. The interviews do support at least certain parts of this viewpoint. LAC did not answer to the request for organizing an interview, not indicating an active interest in discussing the subject. NUNW representative specifically mentioned that they share the viewpoint of LaRRI to the BIG proposal, and therefore will not have anything to add. The representative of NANASO mentioned that they are having a large network of organizations, and in that way they are able to share information efficiently, stating a slightly different role for the organization in the coalition than that of for example that of conducting research (NANASO 2008b). The representative also mentioned that they are part of the Board of the BIG Coalition, and a representative of the organization had also visited Omitara/Otjivero village at the launch of the BIG (NANASO 2008b). The representative of CCN was closely affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN) which has not been a loud supporter of the BIG in the media (CCN 2008). The role of the church in the coalition, according to the interviewee, was to advocate for the BIG in the congregations and to collect funds (2008). The people should, according to the representative, be educated on how to use the money in order to use it properly, which contradicts the official opinion of the BIG Coalition (2008). The representative also mentioned that ELCRN and Bishop Kameeta have had an active role in the BIG Coalition (2008). The representative of the Desk for Social Development, and the representative of LaRRI, both explained the BIG initiative very thoroughly, not referring to other projects of the organization (unlike the representative of the CCN, for example), and therefore these representatives seem to be those who have been actively participating in the progress of the proposal (LaRRI 2008 and DfSD 2008).

In conclusion, it seems that the most active members of the BIG Coalition come from ELCRN, its DfSD, and LaRRI. The newspaper articles, interviews, and a simple analysis of the publications of the coalition support this view. It is impossible to say for granted that the opinions of the active members weigh more, but it is very likely for two

reasons: First, activities of some of the spokespeople can be traced back to the initial proposal in South Africa, and secondly the same people from the same organizations do present their opinions in different forums: in newspapers, in the coalition publications, and in the interviews. This view is further emphasized as the criticism towards the proposal is discussed. For some reason, the activists from South Africa either are not publicly active figures in the coalition (such as Michael Samson), or they do not emphasize their background in South Africa (such as Dirk and Claudia Haarmann).

It is very likely that the spokespeople of the BIG Coalition are those who also form the official opinion. This is because these people have been involved in the South African BIG Coalition, and they have also contributed to most of the publications of the Namibian coalition. These spokespeople also search for social legitimacy for the coalition. This is done in several ways: by providing the publications to the environment as well as making statements to the press. However, the access to all levels of the interorganizational environment is not granted easily. Politicians and social scientists, for example, do not completely share the positive attitude towards the BIG proposal. This can be seen from the criticism aimed at the proposal. In these cases the legitimacy of the arguments by “foreign” critics or those who “are not friends of the poor” is questioned by the spokespeople mentioned above.

6.2 Social Legitimacy Questioned: BIG Coalition and Clashes with the Environment

“Opponent of the Poor” – IMF Opposes BIG

The first example perceived as a threat by the BIG Coalition concerns the statement of the International Monetary Fund to the basic income proposal in Namibia. A staff team of the IMF produced the document for background documentation, and it was completed 9 March 2006. The 111-page paper discusses unemployment, education, poverty and social policy, changing demographics and the sustainability of the universal pension grant, and prospects concerning a monetary union for Namibia (IMF 2006). One of the three main findings of the part *Dimensions of Poverty and Social Policy Towards the Poor* is:

The recent proposal to introduce a Basic Income Grant (BIG)—providing a monthly cash grant to all Namibians below 60 years old—would be very costly and may jeopardize macroeconomic stability. The current estimate suggests that the cost of such a grant would be close to 5 percent of GDP. While it would reduce poverty, the likely effect on income distribution is debatable. (IMF 2006: 17)

After shortly presenting the basic income proposal, two main conclusions are drawn:

Although it is critical to address poverty and inequality in Namibia, the current BIG proposal may put economic stability at risk and could compromise the country's overall prudent fiscal policy stance. - - The affordability of the proposal, possible tax evasion, and effects on macroeconomic stability—one of Namibia's greatest assets—should be carefully analyzed.

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A universal cash grant may have unintended fertility and labor market effects that must be taken into account. If all citizens, including children, are entitled to a monthly cash grant, this may distort incentives to have children and increase fertility, which may conflict with other health policies underway. (IMF 2006: 27.)

The calculations and the approach of the IMF were strongly criticized by the BIG Coalition. *The Namibian* discussed this 21 November 2006 with the headline: "BIG Coalition takes aim at the IMF" (Isaacs 2006f). The coalition claimed that the calculations of the Fund were incorrect, and head of the IMF Delegation, J. Muller agreed on that. Rather than answering to the other claims of the IMF, both Dirk Haarmann and Herbert Jauch attacked strongly against the organization. *The Namibian* reported Haarmann saying that IMF opposed the proposal "on ideological grounds, rather than due to economic or social considerations" (Isaacs 2006g). Jauch, in turn "called the organization an opponent of the poor that influenced governments without taking responsibility or learning from its failures. - - The only rationale behind the IMF's advice was to limit effective redistribution in Namibia" (2006f). Wezi Tjaronda of *New Era* reported on the same occurrence: "The BIG Coalition said the IMF should not be allowed to have a say on Namibia's much needed social policies which once implemented would lead to greater equality and alleviate the misery of the poor, and which would be a first step towards redistributive justice." (Tjaronda 2006c.) Interestingly, the calculations by another foreign organization, Economic Policy

Research Institute (EPRI) of South Africa, were considered as a reliable source of information. Thereafter, Dirk Haarmann adds: “We hope and trust that the government is independent and that the IMF cannot dictate” (2006c).

The IMF responded to the criticism shortly. The Namibian reported 22 November 2006: “IMF responds to BIG criticism, suggests Latin American way” (Isaacs 2006g). In this article “Johannes Mueller, Chief of the IMF’s recent ‘Article IV Mission’ to Namibia” clarified that the previous calculation (of BIG costing 5,5% of the national GDP) was the gross cost of the measure, and the BIG Coalition was correct in stating that the net cost could be lower if part of the grant would be recovered by amendments in taxation. However, Mueller maintained that the cost would still be high, and the IMF had proposed conditional cash-transfer programmes such as Bolsa Familia (Family Fund), that had proved positive results in Brazil (2006g). Finally, according to the Namibian, Mueller had said “however the Namibian Government decided to tackle poverty remained a public policy choice, and the IMF was only acting in an advisory capacity” (2006g).

Three things can be concluded from this debate. First, the representatives of the BIG Coalition are extremely worried that the government of Namibia will be influenced in a wrong way. This can be interpreted as a sign of insecurity concerning the legitimacy of the BIG Coalition in the eyes of the government. Social legitimacy may be high among the NGOs and even the Namibia public, but the government may not have the same perspective. The coalition is therefore not fully legitimate in its general environment. Secondly, a member of the international environment, IMF, does not seem to view the basic income proposal as fully legitimate, or at least not as the only truth. This international organization does not, however, question the legitimacy of the BIG Coalition. Thirdly, the coalition does not seem to be willing to engage in the debate concerning the questions posed by the critiques, but decides to attack the organization instead of answering to the argument. This can be interpreted in two ways: either the coalition does not want to discuss the possible challenges of the basic income proposal, or it understands the criticism of the IMF as an attack towards the legitimacy of the BIG Coalition. In this case, the representative of the IMF respectfully elaborated on its stand,

and did not comment on the allegations of the coalition. The second example provides a more heated debate.

Economist “Insulting the Poor”

Quarterly Economic Review of NEPRU

The results for the first half year after the introduction of the Basic Income Grant in Omitara/Otjivero village were published in September 2008. The booklet “Towards a Basic Income Grant for all!” concludes that the experiment has contributed to the attaining of all the eight Millennium Development Goals set by UN (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2008a: 96-97). The Quarterly Economic Review of Namibian Economic Policy Research Unit NEPRU provided “a critical analysis of the first results”. One and a half-page text with a half-page table raised some questions for further discussion. The paper states that according to the food expenditure analysis, the average household in Otjivero is not poor³³. It also said that “under closer scrutiny some of the effects do not seem to be very dramatic up to now” and that a “thorough analysis is however needed whether this is the best and cheapest option to reduce poverty, and improve health and education” (NEPRU 2008). In the article of New Era 24 October 2008, Rigmar Osterkamp representing NEPRU is quoted saying: “The question is: is giving money to people more effective than [introducing radical] empowerment interventions, and public policies on health and education?” (Heita 2008).

BIG Coalition Answer: NEPRU Should Apologize

The answer to the review was furious. *New Era* reported on 04 November 2008: “BIG Secretariat Wants Nepru to Apologize” (Tjaronda 2008e). It continues as follows: “The BIG Secretariat yesterday said NEPRU comments are an insult to the poor in Otjivero and demanded that the country’s research organization apologise not only to the Otjivero community but also to all Namibians” (2008b). Claudia Haarmann stated that “the coalition wanted a critical analysis of the BIG assessment and nothing else and did not welcome Nepru’s comments” (2008b). NEPRU’s acting director Klaus Schade “said the research organization’s report was to stimulate debate for it to go beyond reports in the media” (2008b).

It might be difficult to understand, what is it that the BIG Coalition wanted NEPRU to apologize for. The press statement dated 3 November 2008 elaborates this part further. However, the statement by Claudia Haarmann is inconsistent, as she does not welcome the comments by NEPRU, but calls for honest and open debate, as well as “critical debate” on the subject. This is emphasized in the press statement. BIG Coalition is careful to use strong words when introducing the results of the first report studying the impact, and commenting on the criticism: “BIG dramatically reduced poverty,” “this strong evidence,” “the Coalition was thus deeply disappointed and dismayed to read the misleading and incorrect assessment of the report,” “claims of NEPRU are based on ill-informed speculation and incorrect extrapolations,” and finally: “NEPRU’s approach is misleading and destroys a transparent and open debate.” The Coalition also reminds that “The *actual* research on the BIG Pilot is being carried out jointly by the Desk for Social Development (ELCRN) and the Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI)” and that the “BIG research report stood up to the most rigorous academic and scientific standards” (Emphasis added, Basic Income Grant Coalition, 2008b). The BIG Coalition states that “NEPRU implies in its ‘Quarterly Economic Review’ that it conducted a ‘research study’ whose findings allegedly contradict the BIG Pilot Project Assessment report” (2008b). Reference to this is not made, and this statement is incorrect as the topic of the paper is: “Basic Income Grant – a critical analysis of the first results” (NEPRU 2008).

At this point, the coalition addresses the methodological errors it finds from NEPRU’s paper claiming that NEPRU has manipulated the data for wrong purposes, used wrong calculation methods, or ignored important pieces of data. Therefore, the coalition draws concluding remarks:

*We welcome an honest and serious debate about the introduction of the BIG in Namibia. However, we cannot tolerate **ideologically-driven propaganda** that chooses to ignore scientific evidence. NEPRU's misleading and incorrect comments on the actual results of the BIG in Otjivero-Omitara, has exposed NEPRU's **position as unethical and extremely biased favouring the rich and powerful while trampling on the poor**. We wonder if NEPRU has published its dismal BIG comments due to a lack of skills and knowledge, due to its own political agenda, or simply to*

*force themselves onto the debate and thereby secure financial resources for future work. In any event, NEPRU acted to the detriment of the people in Otjivero-Omitara and the project as a whole. At a time when the Head of State and Government including the Founding President, Members of the Cabinet of the Republic of Namibia and elected Representatives of Parliament have reacted positively to the first BIG impact assessment report, **NEPRU aligns itself with some conservative white farmers, certain elements in the German Embassy and the discredited neo-liberal Bretton Woods Institutions in a calculated attempt to discredit this initiative.** This constitutes a subversion of the national interest.*

*NEPRU has rather discredited itself and is hence unable to contribute constructively to the BIG debate. The only decent thing left to do, is for NEPRU to apologise to the people of Otjivero-Omitara and the Namibian public in general. **The BIG deserves an honest debate in terms of its proven ability to reduce poverty significantly.***

(Own emphases, BIG Coalition 2008b)

This response is extremely interesting, as the coalition claims to have conducted scientific research, and is officially willing to discuss the proposal openly. This strong attack might be understood from the perspective of social legitimacy. The coalition seems to perceive the criticism by NEPRU to the questioning of the social legitimacy of the work of the coalition. The coalition uses the very language it claims the research institute of using. However, the short article by NEPRU does not use emotional language, only refers to the possibility of miscalculations, and gives a cautious voice to the interpretation of the results. In its statement, BIG Coalition makes it clear that it is only willing to engage in discussion “in terms of its proven ability to reduce poverty significantly” (2008b). In practice this means, that only a positively-toned discussion on the BIG grant is allowed.³⁴

Otjivero Citizens Step in

The emotional emphasis on the matter was emphasized by New Era as it reported on the viewpoints of the Otjivero citizens towards the grant 6 November 2008 (Tjaronda 2008f). The entrepreneurs and the principal of the school, and ordinary people living in the village were interviewed from their positive stands on the grant. Even the shop owner of Omitara came out as saying he was “not opposed to the grant because he lives

off it as well. But more control mechanisms could have been put in place to ensure that the money is properly used” (2008A). “Some Otjivero residents feel that the opponents of BIG are those with everything and do not sleep on empty stomachs,” the article stated (2008A). This newspaper article shows, that the journalist has been willing to contribute to the debate in a seemingly objective way, by asking the people themselves how they perceive the grant. However, this article does not address the claims made by NEPRU, although it is published after the debate between the two organizations.

In December 2008, The Namibian reported that NEPRU had corrected its view on BIG: “The average expenditure figures provided in the assessment report of the Basic Income Grant (BIG) Coalition are not suitable for determining the income poverty level,” the institute’s press statement was quoted. However, NEPRU did not accept the allegations of the BIG Coalition, concerning the favoring of rich, and the allegation of aligning with certain interests. (The Namibian 2008.)

Osterkamp Responds to the Attack

This could have been the end of the publicity of the matter, but one person was not ready to swallow the claims made by the BIG Coalition: Dr. Rigmar Osterkamp, the initial author of the review by NEPRU, insisted on the right to have his view pronounced. His personal comments on the BIG proposal were published in New Era 12 December 2008 with the headline *Basic Income Grant – a Promising Way forward?* He first mentions that social assistance programs were not intended to be unconditional and that the idea of providing an unconditional minimum income “originated in Europe in the 18th century”. Value Added Tax of 30% would be one source of funding the grant, but according to Osterkamp, it would pose financial macroeconomic problems for Namibia unless the neighboring countries of Namibia would follow suit. Osterkamp proposes that the funding would not be possible only by increase in taxation, but other spending items would need to be reduced. The long-run consequences of the grant might be dependency, and he states that “I cannot claim that I am able to provide definitive answers to these questions. But I think there are considerable doubts about the ability of a universal cash grant to help reduce poverty in the long run - - “ (Osterkamp 2008). Furthermore, Osterkamp discusses the possibility of the proposal to gain political

support. This is not probable, according to him, as voters would not think the opposition parties would be able to execute the proposal country-wide, and the politicians might not be keen on doing it either. The financial burden of the grant would be, according to Osterkamp, significant, and “political pressure to increase the grant is much more probable - -“ and “Thus it may become difficult to keep the cash grant reasonably affordable once it is introduced” (Osterkamp 2008). He gives other reasons for his opinion, and concludes that “The introduction of a universal cash grant would make governing the country more difficult, politically and financially” (2008). Finally, he states that “One could regard the cash grant project as just another imported development fashion, promoted by foreign (here German) donor money. But there may be a “higher” idea behind it: some of the donors may, in effect, have Germany and not Namibia in mind. Those wishing to introduce cash grant programmes in Germany might find Namibia a convenient “laboratory” in which their proposals may be tested more easily” (2008).

At this point, the public dialogue between the BIG Coalition and NEPRU had ceased to exist. Despite this, the claims of the Coalition continued. In April 2009, Claudia Haarmann commented on the lack of the BIG proposal in the National budget, and simultaneously took the opportunity to comment on the criticism. “The coalition exposed methodological errors in the NEPRU research to which the institution acceded and Osterkamp returned to Germany in disgrace” (Van den Bosch 2009). This lead Osterkamp to respond publicly in *New Era*, stating that “I wouldn’t have reacted to this interview were it not part of a longer sequence of, let me call it, uncivilized behavior against me” (Osterkamp 2009a). He claimed that “Mr and Mrs Haarmann, both priests of the Evangelical church and doctoral academics, cancelled a presentation about their BIG assessment report in NEPRU’s Lunchtime Seminar, planned since long” (2009a). He continues describing insults by Claudia Haarmann in the press conference organized by the coalition and by Dirk Haarmann in a “semi-official” meeting. Furthermore, Osterkamp had not received an answer to his analysis of the proposal, mentioned in the previous paragraph, and not from “Haarmann’s German employer, the Vereinte Missionsanstalt,” to where he had written a letter concerning the behavior of the priests. He furthermore insists on flaws in the research conducted by the coalition, and concludes “I think that Namibia and the country’s poor deserve a sober and professional

debate about the BIG, not the “Hurrah!” type of publications produced by an in-group of partisans” (2009a).

This perspective was confirmed in the interview with Rigmar Osterkamp 19 July 2009. I asked his opinion concerning the criticism towards him by the representatives of the Coalition. His view was that the coalition might have something to hide, and this would be the reason for aggressive behavior. He was of the opinion that further research concerning the BIG proposal would be needed. He had not been able to access the information collected by the Coalition, with the exception of the booklets published. He also mentioned some methodological errors concerning the pilot project. One of these was the lack of internal funding of the grant in Otjivero. As elsewhere in Namibia, the income distribution in the village is highly unequal. Therefore there would have been an opportunity to look at this perspective as well. This would have been important, because, according to Osterkamp, the funding of the grant is not at all as simple as the coalition proposes. Finally, Osterkamp speculated on the motivations behind the proponents of the grant. According to him, the international discourse concerning the BIG proposal is very important in this context. The German BIG proponents are closely related to the Namibian proponents, and according to Osterkamp, the aim might be to also benefit the German BIG movement. In addition to this, the motivations of Dirk and Claudia Haarmann might be to financially and academically benefit from the success of the proposal in Namibia. (Osterkamp 2009b.)

Urge to Maintain Social Legitimacy

According to my analysis, at the beginning, NEPRU was willing to take part into the discussion on the basic income proposal in Namibia. Osterkamp was perhaps a bit suspicious concerning the results, and by criticizing them, he was perceived to question the legitimacy of the work of the BIG Coalition. In case he had not questioned it before, it became clear that he did so after the official attack from the coalition. The answer to NEPRU’s critique works in a similar way than with the case of IMF: The BIG Coalition answers to the questions concerning the basic income proposal by questioning the legitimacy of the questioner. By using very emotional language the coalition, perhaps unintentionally, reveals the questionability of its own work: Instead of answering to the

questions presented, the coalition uses *ad hominem* arguments to denigrate those who propose other opinions. The social legitimacy provided by certain institutions such as IMF or NEPRU, is not as vital to the work of the BIG Coalition, as the social legitimacy provided by the government. Therefore the answer to criticism is quite different in the following case.

No BIG for the Political Leaders

Prime Minister Nahas Angula was initially slightly positive towards the basic income proposal in Namibia. 09 May 2005 he was quoted in New Era: “Prime Minister Nahas Angula said it was gratifying to note that the civil sector is looking out for the needs of disadvantaged groups in society. - - While at the same time welcoming the idea, Angula said more needs to be done to integrate it with other existing social benefit schemes.” However, at that time, the Prime Minister also mentioned that expansion of the economy would be needed in order to finance the grant. (Gaomas 2005) Only a year later, this tone had changed. Nahas Angula, speaking on behalf of Cabinet announced that the proposal is not affordable. “Angula said if the BIG was indeed believed to be a priority, Government would need to abolish its existing subsidies and grants to make money available.” However, Angula gave “the coalition and its partners the option of raising a fraction of the amount needed for the implementation of the BIG - -”. (Isaacs 2006b.)

What was the response of the BIG Coalition to this? Compared to the previous examples, it was more than mild. “Bishop Zephania Kameeta, said they did not see the response from Government as “very negative”. He said the decision did not mean the end of the BIG idea - - . He said Cabinet had not “closed the door” on them yet” (Isaacs 2006b). The frustration of the coalition came out in another form, as the national television channel had published parts of the meeting in the news report. Bishop Kameeta was quoted saying “While the meeting was held in camera, no journalists had been invited and the delegation understood this as a non-public meeting” (Isaacs 2006c). In this case it was not the rejection itself, but the publicity of it, that gained the attention of the BIG Coalition. This supports the perspective where the social legitimacy is sought for. The coalition seems to react furiously, if the legitimacy of its work is

publicly questioned. In response to the Cabinet decision, Kameeta announced that the BIG Coalition will search for alternative ways of funding the proposal (Isaacs 2006c, Sibeene 2006).

The BIG Coalition continued its work organizing workshops, and setting up the pilot project. Years later, as the pilot project was being drawn into conclusion, Prime Minister Angula came out strongly opposing the grant. As a youth delegation had visited him in October 2009, he was quoted saying that the grant was being as even the richest people would be eligible to receive the grant. Instead, he said, other social grant schemes could be considered in the Namibian context. The coalition's response to this was to rely on the results of the pilot project and to argue that the scheme was indeed affordable, and the best solution to the reduction of poverty. At the same time it was quoted of calling for "constructive and honest debate about the BIG concept". (Shejavali 2009.)

The viewpoint of the Prime Minister was supported by President Hifikepunye Pohamba, who, according to *The Namibian*, answered to the Parliament in April 2010 that dishing out money would lead to exploitation and "encourage people to do nothing" (Kisting 2010a). To this, Kameeta answered on behalf of the BIG Coalition, that he doesn't "want any quarrels with anyone including the President" (Kisting 2010b). However, Kameeta reminded that poverty was a severe problem in Namibia and that the "BIG pilot project at Omitara spoke for itself" (2010b).

These two examples concerning the opinions of Prime Minister and President show that the BIG Coalition faces challenges in convincing the political leadership of the country. Although the coalition might have the social legitimacy in large part of the civil society, the key political figures do not hesitate to disagree with them. This creates a problem, as the coalition cannot openly disagree with the state leaders in a way it has disagreed for example with Osterkamp. In the light of the comments made by the President and the Prime Minister, the coalition does not seem to have the social legitimacy in the eyes of the government. However, the legitimacy of the government is not questioned by the BIG Coalition, as was the case with IMF and NEPRU. The explanation to this lies in the concept of social legitimacy as a resource: The BIG Coalition urgently needs to

maintain or gain social legitimacy by the government of Namibia, in order to attain its aim: the introduction of countrywide basic income grant. Therefore, it cannot discredit the government in a similar way it has done with other, less significant organizations.

“Greedy Shop-owner just wants more money”



Picture 5: The shop-owner of Omitara (BIG Coalition 2008: 91)

This case looks into the objection of the white shop-owner in the village of Omitara, the only person whose critical opinion has been discussed in detail in the Assessment Report by the BIG Coalition. The coalition has headlined the criticism as “Debt” (BIG Coalition 2008a: 90). The shop owner is quoted saying that he was expecting higher turn-out of the grant to his shop. This perspective was confirmed in the personal interview with him (Omitara 13.6.2008b). The booklet suggests that the motivations of the shop-owner are his personal interests of financial gain and proposes a critical approach to his thinking from the very beginning:

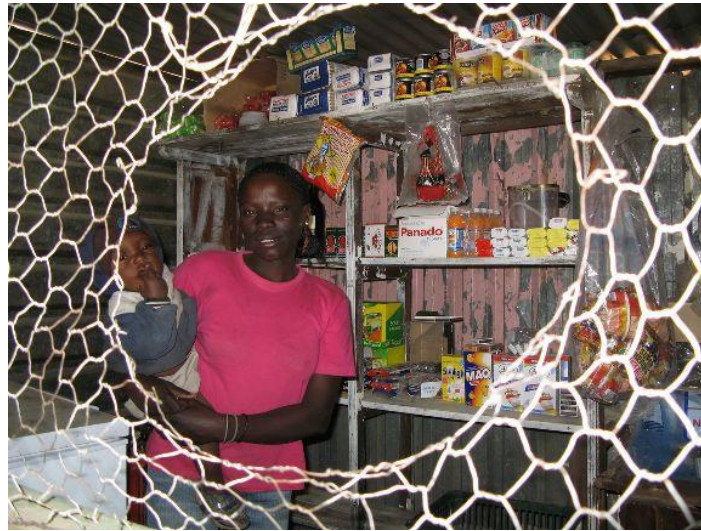
A fourth criticism is a strange one, that a BIG increases indebtedness. On the contrary, evidence from cash transfer programmes in other parts of Africa has shown that such transfers enable people to reduce their debt, and thus enable them to invest to build their livelihoods.

This particular criticism has been made by the owner of the Omitara bottle store/general dealer, who says that since the start of the BIG pilot, debt at his shop has increased. According to him, he was prepared to provide goods on credit because of the BIG. He thus contributed to the growth

of consumer debt himself. Note however, that the evidence from our survey does not indicate an increase in household debt to shops before and after the BIG. If debt has indeed risen in his shop, this appears not to be part of a wider trend.

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As far as paying off debt is concerned, his statement should be weighed against one made by a woman who sells food items in the settlement:



*Picture 7: “Several tuck shops were established after the introduction of the BIG”
(BIG Coalition 2008: 92)*

“I have observed a lot of good things happening [after the BIG]. Many families did not have any food to feed themselves, but now with the BIG money they can afford to buy food. In the past, I would give them things on credit from my shop, but most of them could not pay back. But now they are paying back which is also good for my business.”

(Tuhafeni Veshiyele)

In sum, leaving aside the very personal statements of one businessman, there is no reason to believe that the standard criticisms of the BIG are supported by the experience and statistics gathered since the beginning of the BIG pilot project in Otjivero-Omitara.

This way of discussing this criticism is interesting. Rather than aggressively answering to the criticism in public (such as in the cases of IMF and NEPRU), or looking for the positive sides of the critique (such as in the cases of the Prime Minister and the President), the coalition has decided to include this perspective to the official publication concerning the findings. However, this is done in a very suggestive way. The criticism by the shop-owner is “strange one” as the “evidence from our survey does

not indicate an increase in household debt to shops before and after the BIG” (BIG Coalition 2008: 90). In an interview with the shop-owner he explained that he was initially skeptical towards the idea of selling items in advance for the grant. Therefore he created a list of those who had debts, and had agreed to pay back from the grant. If these people were to pay back their debts, he would have taken new people to the list. This list was public and can be seen in picture 6. According to my interview, the shop owner had not received the payments of the debts, and therefore he refused to take more people to the payment list. This would also explain why the increased indebtedness did not show on the research of the BIG Coalition. (Omitara 13.6.2008b.)

The opinion of this shop owner was presented by the BIG Coalition against another opinion also quoted above. This second opinion was more trustworthy from the viewpoint of the coalition, due to reasons left unexplained in the booklet. The pictures of this chapter also emphasize the attitude of the coalition: Both the shop-owner and the tuck shop-owner are pictured behind the counters of their shop. However, the pictures are quite different. The first picture presents a middle-aged white man behind the bars of his shop, and the original text states “Bottle store / general dealer in Omitara is sceptical about the BIG” (BIG Coalition 2008: 91). The second picture presents a young black woman with her child in her “tuck shop” (2008: 92). This juxtaposition between the rich and the poor – the bad and greedy against those who are good and have nothing is well presented in these two pictures. The booklet also refers in a footnote to a “self-contradictory” statement by the shop-owner without further explanation.

The conclusion of the booklet is that the shop-owner of Omitara has come to oppose the grant as the competition has increased in the village, and thus posed “an economic threat” to him (BIG Coalition 2008: 91). This view was also confirmed by Dirk Haarmann, whom I met during the payout day of June 2008. He asked me whether I had met the shop-owner and then commented that he is a man of business (Omitara 16.6.2008). In my interview, the shop-owner emphasized that he did not want the money to be taken away from the people, but he wanted some control measures to be put in place so that the grant would not have been misused (Omitara 13.6.2008). He did not hide his frustration over the situation, where he had to balance between his business on one hand, and on the other hand face the accusations of being heartless and cruel as

he refused to sell more items on credit to the hungry and poor people of the settlement (13.6.2008).

Unlike with the critique by IMF and NEPRU, the BIG Coalition does not aggressively criticize the critique posed by the shop owner of Omitara. However, it uses the same method of devaluing his opinions by using *ad hominem* argument as the view of a *businessman* is emphasized. This example may serve as a quest for social legitimacy in a certain way: It is one of the rare critiques discussed in the publication of the BIG Coalition, but by publishing the view of the shop owner, the coalition can claim it has published an alternative opinion concerning the proposal. Therefore it can claim to have fulfilled the requirements of “open and honest debate,” and further devalue the comments stating otherwise.

6.3 Search for Legitimacy: Successes and Failures

The BIG Coalition has sought for social legitimacy in various ways. It has chosen those who are the legitimate spokespeople of the organization, but it has failed to grant the legitimacy in situations where its work, or the coalition itself, has come under criticism. The underlying reason can only be speculated here, but there is one thing in common in the cases above: The BIG Coalition does not discuss the BIG proposal itself in public, but searches to discredit those who oppose their arguments, or claims that the rejection of their proposal is not total. An example of the latter can be seen in the case of the Prime Minister and the President. Unfortunate for the coalition, the attacks towards those who have proposed alternative views have diminished the possibility to gain social legitimacy from these critiques. It seems that the coalition does not value those who have proposed counter-arguments, except for those whose arguments they do not see as a total rejection. Therefore, they do not seem to value the social legitimacy provided by the organizations such as IMF and NEPRU.

The Namibian BIG Coalition has continued in the footsteps of its predecessor, South African BIG Coalition, in its way to respond to the criticism. As seen earlier, the first coalition also used this way of discrediting those who opposed the basic income proposal or had suggestions for alterations in it. This attitude might have influenced the opinion of politicians, academics and wider public. By questioning the legitimacy of

those who comment on the proposal, the BIG Coalition has revealed the questionability of the legitimacy of its own actions. This will be discussed in detail in the final chapter of data analysis.

7. Legitimizing the Action – Propositions about Policy and Practice

7.1 The Pilot Project and its Relation to the Coalition

The BIG Coalition has come a long way from the South African proposal in the end of 1990's to the conclusion of the BIG pilot project in Omitara village in the beginning of 2010. The form of the organization has been the same from the beginning of the time period under closer scrutiny. However, there has been a clear change during these years. The government lobbyist organization has changed to a development organization, as it launched the BIG pilot project. This chapter aims at understanding this new direction of the coalition. It also attempts to conclude the answer to the research question and discuss the transformation of the coalition as well as analyze the reasons for this change.

As mentioned earlier, this part follows the propositions concerning policy and practice by David Mosse. Four of his five propositions are relevant to this research. These propositions assist in analyzing the basic income pilot project. The first proposition looks at the motivations behind the project and argues that the project is one way of seeking the legitimacy for the work of the coalition. The second argument understands the pilot project as being crucial for the BIG Coalition, and not vice versa, unlike it may be implied. The third proposal analyses the attempts to keep the coherence of the policy proposal. The final proposal, in turn, scrutinizes the concept of “success” as a policy-oriented judgment, which does not necessarily have a connection to the reality.

The purpose of this final chapter is to draw together the ideas presented above, and enhance the understanding of the work of the BIG Coalition. The theory of Mosse is based on ethnographic research, and although my research consists of other methodology, the ideas of Mosse assist in analyzing the situation of the BIG Coalition and its relationship with the pilot project. The concepts and analysis presented above are connected here to Mosse's theory and to the BIG pilot project. The pilot project is one

of the most central elements in the work of the BIG Coalition, and therefore it should be a visible part in the analysis of the basic income proposal.

7.2 Mobilising Political Support or Orientating Practice?

According to the first argument in the theory of David Mosse “- - a project design is itself a bid for political support, a site for coalition building at different levels (that continues beyond design)” and as he discusses his own experience from a development project from India, “there were strategic silences on questions such as land reform or conflicts over tenure, or local corruption or state violence against tribals” (Mosse 2005: 35). This concludes to the idea of policy maintaining the support: rather legitimizing than orientating the practice. In conclusion, the first argument of Mosse builds upon the idea of outside-created policy set up in an environment unfamiliar to the implementers. Concerning the BIG, the proposal can be seen as the above-mentioned policy recommendation. In the light of Mosse's argument, the practice seeks legitimacy, and therefore the BIG Coalition is seeking to legitimize the Pilot Project (practice), rather than orientating the project to respond to the suggested policy proposal as carefully as possible. In conclusion, the BIG Coalition has sought to legitimize the pilot project, and to mobilize and maintain political support.

The BIG Coalition is officially a non-political organization. It does not, for example accept political parties as members, although individual contributions are welcomed (CoD 2008). During the workshop for the NGOs, the politicization of the BIG proposal was one of the concerns of the participants (Brakwater 2009). However, the BIG proposal certainly is a policy proposal, as it suggests radical changes to the redistribution of government revenue. Therefore, it is not surprising that the coalition has number of times called for “political will” to conduct the proposal in the whole country (see for example Tjihenuna 2009, NANGOF 2008, BIG Coalition 2008a: 15 and Tjaronda 2009a). As seen in the data analysis above, the critical observations on BIG were not seen positively, as encouraging to orientating practice, but as threat to the social legitimacy of the BIG proposal and to the Pilot Project (see for example Osterkamp 2009a and LaRRI 2009).

Furthermore, when asked from Dirk Haarmann, if there are any adjustments that could be made to the BIG, the answer was “no” (Omitara 16.6.2008). This is not surprising when looking at the initial launch of the BIG pilot project: Quoted above, Dirk Haarmann mentioned at the launch of the Pilot Project that “it’s basically to get a concrete example of how the BIG can work, which we can show Government” (Isaacs 2007c). It is therefore quite clear the BIG is not a policy proposal open for debate, as the fundamentals cannot be changed. Therefore, it has been important for the coalition to gain political support – to legitimize the Pilot Project, and the policy proposal – rather than engage itself in a public debate on the matter.

In conclusion, the first proposition of policy and practice does not apply to the BIG Coalition – from the official viewpoint: The proposal is not political, as it does not involve political parties of Namibia. This analysis contradicts the official view, as the BIG is a policy proposal – it calls for a new policy concerning the distribution of funds in the country. Some researchers and politicians have engaged in debate with the coalition – resulting negative feedback discussed earlier. In my opinion the first proposition indeed applies to the BIG proposal: The coalition has had an urge to legitimize the Pilot Project and the proposal, but it has not been eager in engaging in an open debate concerning the matter.

7.3 Development Intervention Driven by an Exigency of Organization

Mosse states: “The fact remains, however, that villagers themselves had little control over project processes or budgets. Rather than implementing their own ‘village development plan’, they found that components of it (individual schemes and subsidies) would be delivered on an item-by-item basis (instead of in logically related bundles) (Mosse 2005: 115). This example illustrates the second point of the argument by Mosse: “Development interventions are not driven by policy but by the exigencies of organisations and the need to maintain relationships” (2005: 15). In the context of Namibian basic income grant proposal it is argued that the BIG Pilot Project is not driven by the basic income grant policy proposal, but by the need of the BIG Coalition to maintain relationships and to maintain the legitimacy of the organization.

It has been argued above that the BIG Coalition has provided a policy proposal, but there has not been debate on how to adjust the policy to answer the specific needs and the situation of Namibia. Therefore, it is quite probable that the BIG Pilot Project has not been driven by policy, but by the need to gain support for the BIG Coalition. Mosse provides an example where he states that the people of the village participating in the project had little influence on how the project took place, or was budgeted for.

The coalition has stated publicly that it has been searching for a village where to conduct the BIG experiment, and finally chosen Omitara for this (Isaacs 2007d and 2008a). No reference has been made to the consultation of the citizens of the village about their perception of the project before the launch. The first assessment report of the BIG Coalition “*Towards a Basic Income Grant for all!*” however refers to “healthy suspicion towards development aid and outside ‘assistance’, which they saw as short-term gestures and ill-conceived projects”³⁵ (Basic Income Grant Coalition 2008a: 44.) The answer to these suspicions was to bring Bishop Zephania Kameeta, the leading public figure in support of the grant, to the village, to “allay some of their fears” (ibid.). In response to this, a village committee was formed, which, according to the coalition, was “an entirely organic process initiated and developed by the community itself without outside interference” (ibid.). This report provides information on the suspicions of the people living at the village, but not on how the fears were allayed. This project was also planned outside the village, and brought in without further discussion³⁶.

An outsider perspective to the pilot project has been challenging to find. The coalition has been an efficient gatekeeper of the village, as the newspaper articles nationally and internationally reflect the ideas of the coalition, and suitable village members are chosen to be the representatives of Omitara/Otjivero to outsiders. The access to the village itself was actually relatively easy to acquire, as the people of Omitara were welcoming to outsider observant, especially when the pilot project began in 2008. In 2009, however, there were certain people who did not want to talk to outsiders at all, or offered to discuss, but not about the BIG (Omitara 20.6.2009). An encounter with a woman from the committee made it clear that the BIG Coalition did not want outsiders to visit the village by themselves, as people could, according to her, be saying wrong things about the project (Omitara 20.6.2009).

The official and the critical perspective to the BIG as conducting development intervention refer to a non-participatory approach. People were ‘convinced’ of the good intentions of the project, and they were allowed to build their local committee for the BIG. However, the people were not asked to contribute to the project, not financially or by debate. The structure of the project strongly supports the BIG Coalition in its work, and despite the claims of the coalition not to intervene (Omitara 16.6.2008), it has certainly made itself visible and well-known in the village by for example delivering the grant during the first months of the project (ibid.). This would refer to the need to maintain the role and legitimacy of the BIG Coalition in the pilot project.

7.4 Maintaining Coherent Policy Ideas

Mosse states that “all development projects - - work to maintain themselves as coherent policy ideas – as systems of representations – as well as operational systems.” (Mosse 2005: 159.) One of the most interesting parts of Mosse’s argument entwines around the project representation to outsiders. According to Mosse, presenting the project as a coherent policy system is vital to development projects. This is an interesting viewpoint from the perspective of the BIG Coalition. The argument here is, that the BIG Project works to maintain itself as a coherent policy idea (as a system of representation), as well as an operational system. This has been important when outsiders have been brought to the village, and might explain the hostile attitude by a representative of the village committee, which was encountered when visiting the village in 2009 (Omitara 20.6.2009).

Mosse describes the rituals of development projects where the visitors to the projects are “honoured but controlled” (Mosse 2005: 166). Furthermore, Mosse argues that “visitor ignorance of project practices is not individual but institutional” (2005: 167). Mosse refers to the visits done by the donors, but this applies to the other visits to the village, controlled by donors (BIG Coalition), as well. By looking closer to the BIG Pilot Project village, it can be seen that the project practices are indeed institutionalized. As mentioned above, the BIG Committee members were well aware of their role in the project, and either granted or denied the possibility to walk around freely and discuss with people of the village (Omitara 31.5.2008 and 20.6.2009). Finally, Mosse states that

“As much as anything, then, visits helped to secure project success. Visitors remained ignorant of the contradictions of the project, or unable to criticize the dominant interpretations offered” (Mosse 2005: 167). This applies to the other than donor visitors to the BIG project village as well: There has been no criticism (at least in public) towards the project by those who have been “granted” an opportunity to visit the village.

Public support has been maintained by these visits to the village by outsiders such as reporters and politicians (Isaacs 2008c, LaRRI 2009). But there is another aspect for the closer perspective in maintaining coherent policy ideas, namely the one of maintaining the coherence inside the coalition itself. The representatives of the member organizations had different viewpoints on sharing the data with outsider researchers (for example Osterkamp 2009b and LaRRI 2009), but also different perspectives on the BIG proposal. Some, for example openly stated, that the grant should be accompanied by education on how to use the additional funds (CCN 2008), something opposing to the initial proposal of the coalition.

Publicly, the BIG Proposal might look like a coherent policy idea without any need for “maintaining” coherence. However, a closer scrutiny addresses some elements which indicate that the coalition indeed has an urge to present the project as a coherent policy system, and therefore there is a need to control the access to the Pilot Project, and to refrain from public debate. It should also be mentioned that the incoherence in the policy proposal weakens the situation of the coalition, and might reduce its social legitimacy in the country.

7.5 ‘Success’ as a policy-oriented judgment

In the last part of his argument, Mosse describes the significance of the project to the Bhil villagers. This was not connected to the ‘success’ or ‘failure’ of the project, but the underlying perceptions of the impact (Mosse 2005: 205). These perceptions were both positive and negative, and some of the impacts were unintentional (2005: 206-209). The benefits of the project were unevenly distributed, as those who already were in possession of certain goods, land or education tended to gain a privileged access to the benefits (2005: 210-211). In conclusions, Mosse states: “The IBRFP project ‘worked’ in

two distinct senses: first, it established itself as an exemplar of policy, generating valid interpretations; and second, it had some positive local socio-economic effects. There is not necessarily a connection between the two. The project did not work because it turned policy into reality. Rather, it sustained policy models offering a significant interpretation of the situation. - - In a sense, all development programmes work politically through interpretation and the creative capacity of policy to connect economic and historical processes of change to its normative schemes” (2005: 231). The final argument of Mosse is the following: *‘Success’ and ‘failure’ are policy-oriented judgements that obscure project effects*. In relation to the BIG Pilot project, one could state that success of the BIG Pilot Project is a policy-oriented judgement, which obscures the project effects. The coalition needed ‘success’ in order to legitimize the pilot project and the work of the organization, and therefore the real effects behind this façade are difficult to evaluate.

In the case study of Mosse, the villagers had both positive and negative perceptions of the project, and the impacts were sometimes unintentional. Arguably, this is the case with the Namibian BIG Project as well. The coalition was quick to claim the BIG Pilot Project as success, first public announcement dated as early as 18 February 2008 (Isaacs 2008d), after the second payout day. Assessment Reports, named *“Towards a Basic Income Grant for all!”* published in September 2008 (BIG Coalition, 2008a) and *Making the difference! The BIG in Namibia* published in April 2009 (BIG Coalition 2009), claimed the project as success, far before the pilot had finished in December 2009. The case studies the coalition has brought up in the reports are examples of positive local socio-economic effects. However, this claim of ‘success’ does not indicate the long-term impacts of the Pilot Project in Omitara/Otjivero village. Furthermore, the wider data behind this claim of this success has been impossible to reach (Haarmann & Palomäki 2009, Osterkampb 2009). Therefore, despite the positive socio-economic effects of the project, a larger impact of the BIG for the whole Namibia is difficult to scrutinize, especially in the light of the BIG Pilot Project.

7.6 Conclusion: BIG Pilot Project, Policy and Practice

This chapter has taken a look into the BIG pilot project through David Mosse's proposals concerning policy and practice. First, it was stated that the BIG pilot project was designed to gain political support for the BIG Coalition, rather than to search for the best practice in this specific case. Although the BIG Coalition has formally changed from an organization supporting the idea of basic income into an organization conducting development cooperation, the background idea for the work of the coalition has not changed. The BIG pilot project is an attempt to mobilize political support, not to orientate practice. Second, the development intervention, which in this case is the pilot project, was driven by the exigency of the BIG Coalition. The coalition needs social legitimacy in order to gain support for the BIG policy proposal, and therefore the criticism towards the pilot project or its results could not be tolerated. The social legitimacy was also sought for while maintaining coherent policy ideas. Therefore, there were only certain people who were legitimate spokespeople of the BIG Coalition. Finally, the term "success" was a policy-oriented judgment rather than a verified result of the research.

Social legitimacy, policy and practice have been the key terms of this chapter. It has been observed that the BIG Coalition has not transformed significantly during the time period under scrutiny, although the tasks set for the coalition have changed. This final results chapter has shown how social legitimacy for one policy proposal has been sought for in the BIG pilot project. Now I will turn once more to the research questions, and make the concluding remarks in relation to the results of this thesis.

8. Conclusion

The theoretical background for this thesis has included the concepts of NGOs, coalition, organizational environment and stakeholders, resource dependence perspective and social legitimacy, as well as propositions about policy and practice. The research question was formulated based on these concepts: **How has the Namibian BIG Coalition been formed and transformed during the time period between 2003 and 2009?** A number of supporting questions were included in the study: What kind of an

organization the BIG Coalition is? How have the BIG proposal and the BIG Coalition been formed in respect to critical events? How is the social legitimacy maintained in the work of the BIG Coalition?

8.1 Formation and Transformation of the BIG Coalition in Namibia

The thesis has looked into the formation and transformation of the BIG Coalition in Namibia. The work of the coalition has begun already in South Africa, and the coalition form has been transferred to Namibia. The proposal has been brought up in several occasions, and the Namibian press has been devoted to report on these occasions regularly. As the proposal was not taken up actively by the Namibian government, the coalition decided to implement the BIG pilot project in one Namibian village. This changed the character of the coalition from a loose lobbying coalition into a development organization.

The transformation of the BIG Coalition from a lobbying organization to a development organization seemed to be rather smooth. However, the coalition faced challenges in combining its role as it was simultaneously lobbying for the grant, conducting the pilot project, and undertaking research on the subject. The coalition was protective towards the pilot project, and as it was striving to maintain social legitimacy, it had to respond even to light criticism in an aggressive way. This worked against the coalition, as the results of the project could not be evaluated by those who work outside the organization, and therefore the legitimacy of the work could not be verified.

8.2 BIG Coalition as an Organization

One of the chapters presented the structure of the BIG Coalition, the central elements in the analysis of coalitions, as well as analyzed the environment and the stakeholders. Two cases concerning the relations with the stakeholders were presented. It was observed that the BIG Coalition might not only be understood as a coalition. Members of the coalition do not always have close linkages to their own member organizations, and therefore the BIG Coalition can be understood as a network of organizations.

The coalition has lobbied for the implementation of the basic income grant in Namibia. The history of this organization reaches back to South Africa, where a very similar proposal has been discussed couple of years earlier. The formation of the Namibian coalition has been followed, and its environment and stakeholders has been analyzed. One of the chapters took a look into the BIG pilot project through David Mosse's proposals concerning policy and practice. It was argued that the BIG pilot project was designed to gain more political support for the BIG Coalition, not to search for the best practice in relation to the development of Omitara/Otjivero village.

8.3 Formation of the BIG Proposal and the Critical Events

The basic income grant proposal has been the very same throughout the years, but the role of the BIG Coalition in Namibia has changed. First it was a network of organizations, which supported the idea of basic income. Gradually the idea of piloting the proposal in a Namibian village was presented, and finally the BIG Coalition launched the project, and in this way became an organization for development cooperation, which simultaneously claimed to do research concerning the project. The aim was not, however, to bring development to Omitara as such, but to show that the basic income would have so positive results, that the government would be willing to implement it on a national level.

The Namibian BIG Coalition has continued the work of its South African counterpart. However, the Desk for Social Development of ELCRN church claim the proposal has been brought up by Namibian Tax Consortium, which indeed recommended further scrutiny concerning BIG – in one of its eighteen recommendations. The BIG Coalition was taken up by DfSD, and the proposal was discussed in the Namibian media. However, the government did not support the proposal, and the BIG Coalition sought for support elsewhere. After presenting the idea of BIG in a UN meeting, it announced the pilot project of BIG, which was organized in Omitara during the years 2008 and 2009. Despite a number of clashes with the environment, the coalition continued the pilot project until the end of 2009, and claimed the project as success.

8.4 Maintaining and Creating Social Legitimacy

The history of NGOs was briefly presented in chapter 2.3. It was mentioned that the role of NGOs in advocacy work has increased in the past decades, and it can be seen that the BIG Coalition is one example of this. I also mentioned that the discussion concerning the legitimacy of the work of these NGOs has also increased recently. This thesis has also discussed this perspective, as the legitimacy of the actions of the coalition has been under scrutiny, and also the search for social legitimacy by the coalition has been analyzed.

It has been argued that social legitimacy is the key resource for the BIG Coalition, and therefore it has sought for it in various ways. The coalition has also responded quite aggressively when the legitimacy of its work or the very existence of the coalition has been questioned. The Namibian BIG Coalition has continued in the footsteps of its predecessor, South African BIG Coalition, in its way to respond to the criticism. As discussed earlier, the first coalition also used this way of discrediting those who opposed the basic income proposal or had suggestions for alterations in it. This attitude might have influenced the opinion of politicians, academics and wider public. By questioning the legitimacy of those who comment on the proposal, the BIG Coalition has revealed the questionability of the legitimacy of its own actions.

The BIG Coalition has built its relations and sought for legitimacy in the environment in a number of ways. Two case studies showed the influence of South African BIG Coalition, and on the other hand, described the influence of the Namibian coalition to a number of NGOs in a workshop. The latter example showed how the representatives of the BIG Coalition use their power to prove their legitimacy in the NGO sector. The representatives are capable of convincing their audience when the largest part of it consists of the representatives of civil society.

It has been argued that those who are the legitimate spokespeople of the BIG Coalition are also those who formulate the official opinions. This view has been supported by the fact that some of these spokespeople have been active in the South African BIG Coalition. These people have also answered to the critique, presented here in four case studies. Finally the analysis of the actions of the coalition concerning the BIG pilot

project was drawn together in the propositions about policy and practice by David Mosse, where they were analyzed in the light of the BIG pilot project.

The BIG Coalition has been preoccupied in maintaining its political support and legitimizing its own work and the BIG Pilot Project. This has led to an unfortunate situation, where part of the very relevant information for a debate about the positive and negative sides and effects of the grant have not been made public. Instead, the Coalition has claimed the pilot project as successful before the end of the project, and it has not shown signs of discussing the possible alternatives to the Basic Income Grant in Namibia. This is not to say that the BIG Pilot Project has failed; it is possible, that the grant has had positive effect on the lives of individual members of Omitara/Otjivero village. However, the coalition does not provide sufficient information for drawing further conclusions in whether the BIG could be regarded as a solution to the poverty in Namibia.

Although the BIG Coalition has formally changed from an organization supporting the idea of basic income into an organization conducting development cooperation, the background idea for the work of the coalition has not changed. It was argued that the BIG pilot project is an attempt to mobilize political support, not to orientate practice. The development intervention, which in this case was the BIG pilot project, was driven by the exigency of the BIG Coalition. The coalition needs social legitimacy in order to gain support for the BIG policy proposal, and therefore the criticism towards the pilot project or its results could not be tolerated. The social legitimacy was also sought for while maintaining coherent policy ideas. Therefore, there were only certain people who were legitimate spokespeople of the BIG Coalition. Finally, the term “success” was understood as a policy-oriented judgment rather than a verified result of the research.

8.5 Overall Conclusion

The Namibian BIG Coalition has brought up a vivid discussion concerning basic income in Namibia. It has taken influence from its South African counterparts, but also from Namtax consortium. There are several examples which show the close relationship between the Namibian and South African proposals, although these are not openly discussed in public. However, the basic income proposal has gained support among

Namibian civil society sector, as there is a number of member NGOs in the Namibian BIG Coalition, and the feedback from other organizations has often been positive.

The coalition has, however, failed in convincing the researchers on the impact of the BIG pilot project of Omitara/Otjivero village, as it has not been transparent in presenting the methodology and the results of the research. The key politicians of Namibia, including the President and the Prime Minister, are not convinced of the background idea of the BIG Coalition either, and therefore it seems that the coalition has not been successful in lobbying for the basic income grant in Namibia.

The coalition has been striving for attaining social legitimacy in its environment, and it has indeed succeeded on certain occasions, and failed on others. It has questioned the legitimacy of those who have commented on the proposal, and it has refrained from commenting on majority of the criticism. The suggestion for basic income is a policy proposal, and therefore it has been vital to the coalition to assure the politicians of the country in its importance. The basic income pilot project was conducted in order to show that basic income would work, not to seek for the best possible way of developing the pilot project village. Therefore the role of the BIG Coalition has been threefold: On one hand its task has been to assure the politicians and the public of the good aspects of basic income proposal. On the other hand, it has been working as an organization conducting development cooperation, as it has conducted the BIG pilot project. Finally, the coalition has claimed to be doing research on the pilot project village. By conducting individually these three roles, the legitimacy of the work of the BIG Coalition can be questioned: It is impossible to conduct objective research on something that has already been branded as a success, and by somebody who is not willing to discuss alternatives to the proposal.

The Namibian Basic Income Grant Coalition presents an interesting example on how development NGOs can function. The perspective of social legitimacy as a resource has assisted in understanding, why certain actions have been made by the organization. This is something that might assist in understanding the work of other development organizations, especially of those that have aims at changing specific policies. A closer analysis on the background and the environment of these organizations assists in

understanding why do organizations transform, and why they respond in certain ways when they perceive that their social legitimacy is questioned.

8.6 Future of the BIG Coalition

To this date, the government of the Republic of Namibia has not taken up the proposal of the BIG Coalition, and it does not seem probable that it will do so in the nearby future. The Pilot Project for BIG came to an end in 2009, and the coalition will now continue to support the village by other means (Shejavali 2009b). This means that the official aim of the BIG Coalition has not been reached and the attempt to apply the policy into practice has not been realized.

The work of the Namibian BIG Coalition seems, however, to continue. For example the homepage continues to be updated, and articles concerning the proposal are still discussed in the media. For now it seems that the Coalition will not publish its final report, but has changed the name of the April 2009 report as final. Further information concerning the project is not likely to be available, as the representatives of the coalition have not been willing to share it openly during the pilot project either. It seems that Dirk and Claudia Haarmann have left the BIG Coalition as their homepage states that they have worked for the coalition until April 2010, and that they are currently “Directors of the ‘Theological Institute for Advocacy and Research in Africa’ (TARA)” (Haarmann & Haarmann 2010)³⁷.

The basic income proposal has gained support among a number civil society groups in Namibia, and their influence to the government remains to be seen. The Namibian BIG Coalition might not have gained legitimacy from all sectors of its environment, but some do seem to support the proposal. Whether the discussion concerning the basic income will fade in the following years remains yet to be seen.

8.7 Recommendations for Further Research

There are at least three very interesting topics I have not been able to concentrate on in this research. The first one concerns the role of the donors in relation to the Namibian BIG Coalition. It has been speculated that the basic income proposal might have

political and financial backing from Germany, and the German donors might be interested in using the Namibian case as a laboratory for their own purposes. This leads to the relationship of the two sides of the basic income proposal. One concentrates on providing social grants in a country where the grants are very small or non-existent, and the other side proposes the basic income as something that would clear the current bureaucratic system of social grants. It would be interesting for example to compare the German discussion on basic income with the Namibian discussion.

Secondly, a more comprehensive experiment of basic income remains to be seen. The Namibian experiment does not take the aspect of funding into account, as donors are used to fund the pilot project. This, to my understanding, is a severe limitation to the experiment, as it certainly is simply more challenging to collect money than share it out. The information provided by the BIG Coalition is not enough to draw conclusions concerning the basic income policy proposal, and the project would have certainly demanded an evaluation from the outside. If the pilot project on basic income was to be properly conducted, these two aspects would be fundamental in gaining reliable results.

Finally, the situation of Namibian politics would need to be studied upon, in order to understand the possibility of a policy proposal to be conducted in the country. There are several open questions concerning this perspective. For example: Is lobbying efficient? Are there alternative ways of influencing the government? In case the BIG Coalition would want the basic income to be conducted in the country, it should certainly influence the political decision-makers, and do this very effectively. Further research would be needed for understanding how this is done in Namibia.

Chapter 1

¹See for example the homepage of the Basic Income Earth Network in <<http://www.basicincome.org>> or the U.S. Basic Income Guarantee Network homepage in <<http://www.usbig.net/>>.

² “The HDI – human development index – is a summary composite index that measures a country's average achievements in three basic aspects of human development: health, knowledge, and a decent standard of living. Health is measured by life expectancy at birth; knowledge is measured by a combination of the adult literacy rate and the combined primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrolment ratio; and standard of living by GDP per capita (PPP US\$).” (UNDP 2009b)

³ “This indicator [the GINI coefficient] is a summary statistics of the Lorenz Curve. It is a measure of the income distribution in a country. It compares the actual distribution to a total equal distribution. The

coefficient ranges from 0 to 1. An equal distribution of income gives a coefficient close to 0. The more unequal the distribution is the closer the coefficient is to 1. The coefficient gives different results depending on how it is calculated.

In this survey [NHIES] it is calculated on the adjusted per capita income of every single household member, which gives a more accurate result. It can also be calculated on average per capita income per household or per groups of population or households - - ." (CBS 2006: 24.)

⁴ Cunliffe and Erreygers refer to Charles Fourier and his concept of minimum as a Fourierist tradition. They also discuss the role of minimum in relation to the analysis by J.S. Mill. (Cunliffe & Erreygers 2001: 460-466.)

⁵ As Van Parijs (2000) also points out, there is a universal basic income in place already in Alaska, United States. Although this is not explicitly called Universal Basic Income (which Van Parijs a bit misleadingly suggests), it basically fulfills the description given to basic income grant above. The greatest differences between the Alaskan version and the BIG are that the money is shared yearly, and it is shared from the Alaska Permanent Fund, which comprises of the funds the state receives from oil markets (Goldsmith 2001). Although, according to Goldsmith, these are not the key aspects of the income to Alaskans, the Permanent Fund Dividend (PFD) is non-means-tested, and it provides a basic income (2001). This program has been in place already since the year 1982 (2001), so it is quite exceptional in the time-scale as well. For more information concerning the basic income proposal in the North America, see homepage of the U.S. Basic Income Guarantee Network in <<http://www.usbig.net/>> .

⁶ There is another interesting point with the formulation of the Difference Principle. Together with the lexical difference principle (where, in perhaps oversimplified terms, the situation of the welfare of the worst-off person is first maximized, then the welfare of the second-worst-off, and so on, until the best-off person is reached). Rawls comments: "I think, however, that in actual cases this principle is unlikely to be relevant, for when the greater potential benefits to the more advantaged are significant, there will surely be some way to improve the situation of the less advantaged as well." (Emphasis added, Rawls 1972: 72.) Here Rawls shows that he believes it is not necessary for inequalities to exist as such, since the situation of less advantaged can be improved in line with the more advantaged individuals. This can be considered as a political argument as well, since it is not always considered even possible to improve the situation of the worst-off. This obviously depends on the structure and the political will of the society.

⁷ Interestingly, Van Parijs uses the word "maximin," the term Rawls has specifically rejected - when discussing the concept of justice - in favor of the Difference Principle (Rawls 1971: 72-73).

⁸ To illustrate the situation, Van Parijs brings out the challenge of Crazy and Lazy. In this hypothetical world, Crazy and Lazy are living with exactly equal talents, but different lifestyles. While Crazy is willing to earn a lot, and work a lot, Lazy is pretty much satisfied with what he has, and not so keen on working much. Now, if the grant is "at the highest feasible level," the net income of Crazy is lower than she would like it to be, but Lazy is quite satisfied with what he gets. Van Parijs points out that the high-grant argument by Rawls seems to support the unfair treatment of Crazy against Lazy. Considering the situation further, we need to be reminded of the fact that we are striving for the "maximizing" of real freedom, not welfare as such (at least if we want to follow the real-libertarian path). This means that the discrimination against some is not justified in favor of the individuals having more expensive taste" (1991: 106).

An extensive discussion concerning Dworkin's work on equality on external resources can be, as with the case of "expensive taste," attained from his article "What is Equality" (from the second part). He specifically points out that he is not discussing the idea of political power, but his statements point out to interesting ways for the organization of the society nevertheless. His work constitutes a very interesting background for the discussion on the basic income, and should definitely be taken up in more theoretical context concerning the basic income grant. For details, see Dworkin 1981.

In order to illustrate Dworkin's point, Van Parijs continues with the already known example of "Crazy" and "Lazy". He mentions that if Crazy and Lazy were endowed an equal plots of land, but they are not allowed to trade their plots, the real-libertarian case is not optimal. That is the reason to accept the possibility for these individuals to be allowed to trade their pieces of land. Now, according to Van Parijs,

the following suggestion arises: “There is a nonarbitrary and generally positive legitimate level of basic income that is determined by the per capita value of society's external resources and must be entirely financed by those who appropriate these resources. If Lazy gives up the whole of his plot of land, he is entitled to an unconditional grant at a level that corresponds to the value of that plot. Crazy, on the other hand, can be viewed as receiving this same grant, but as owing twice its amount because of appropriating both Lazy's share of land and her own. Thus - - the legitimate level of basic income is just the endogenously determined value of their equal tradable right to land.” (Van Parijs 1995: 112.)

Chapter 2

⁹ This was due to the inability of the interviewees to provide exact information on their incomes and expenditures. A closer scrutiny would have required more detailed analysis, which was impossible to conduct due to constrain of time and research capacity.

¹⁰ For a more detailed discussion on the concept of civil society in the context of Africa, see for example Harbeson et al (1994) and Comaroff & Comaroff (1999). An interesting detail from the latter publication describes critically the artificial formation of the civil society among the so-called bushmen of Namibia (Garland 1999).

¹¹ Hatch and Cunliffe remind that “Resource dependence theory elaborated strategic contingency theory’s central claim by explaining that the scarcity of critical resources provokes uncertainty, the management of which, in turn, produces differential subunit power” (2006: 258). When this power is gained, it can be used in institutionalizing the influence, which then again affects the environment. “In other words, environments give rise to uncertainty, uncertainty creates opportunities for power differentials among organizational units (groups), power differentiations are used to distribute formal authority, those granted authority make key decisions that affect organizational actions that change the environment and so on.” (2006: 258). Hatch and Cunliffe discuss the work of Salancik and Pfeffer, who claim that the perspective becomes political, as the actors dealing well with uncertainty are rewarded with more resources or higher status.

Hatch and Cunliffe discuss the politics of resource dependence referring to the situation where the resources are used for creating legitimacy for one’s own position, leading to the dismissal of the core task of the organization. This often involves the use of symbols of power, which can include a large variety of elements, and brings the symbolic-interpretive approach into the discussion. (2006: 258-259). The symbolic-interpretive perspective takes the analysis one step further in the institutionalization theory. According to Hatch and Cunliffe, the work of Selznick elaborated by DiMaggio and Powell forms the basis of this approach. The environments set demands to the organizations in two ways. The first one includes “technical, economic and physical demands,” but also “social, cultural, legal or political demands” (2006: 86). “Not only do organizations require raw materials, capital, labor, knowledge, and equipment, they also depend upon the acceptance of the society in which they operate,” Hatch and Cunliffe state (2006: 87). This brings in the concept of social legitimacy. However, this thesis discusses the concept directly under the theory of resource dependence, as to my understanding there are no limitations to the use of the concept directly under this theory.

¹² The “failure” of the BIG Project would indeed be an interesting topic to discuss. Although the Coalition has not succeeded in lobbying the government, it does not mean the BIG Project could be labeled being failed. This is a topic to be discussed further in another paper.

Chapter 3

¹³ I have translated the text of Alasuutari for this chapter myself.

¹⁴ An exception to this was made by Uhuru Dempers, who, at the end of my stay of 2009, asked me to join the activities of the coalition. However, at that time I had already collected my data, and was leaving the country within couple of weeks.

Chapter 4

¹⁵ The NUNW left the BIG Coalition in July 2010 (Ndjebela 2010), leaving behind speculations of the situation of the labour in the country. However, the separation was seen as a stand in line with the official

position of the government. As the time period under scrutiny does not reach until the date of separation, I only mention it briefly.

¹⁶ These are the loudest spokespeople according to their appearances in the Namibian newspapers, as will be discussed later.

¹⁷ "Six years ago, at the request of their bishop, Haarmann and his wife established the church's social welfare group. Since then, they have been living and working on the church premises here in Windhoek, attending mass in the morning and devising ways to fight poverty in the afternoon." (Krahe 2009) The translation of an article from *der Spiegel* reveals that the Desk for Social Development of ELCRN was formed in 2003, and that certain bishop was its initiator. In this light, it is entirely possible that the desk has been formed for the sole purpose of conducting the BIG experiment and lobbying for the grant.

¹⁸ Namibian dollar is pegged to South African rand and therefore R100=N\$100.

¹⁹ The name of NANGOF has recently been changed to Nangof Trust.

Chapter 5

²⁰ Other sources refer to "the Committee of Inquiry into a Comprehensive System of Social Security for South Africa", appointed by the cabinet. See for example Barchiesi: 2006: 12.

²¹ The original reports can be attained from the homepage of Southern African Regional Poverty Network (Taylor Committee 2000).

²² More background information about the BIG proposal in relation to the poverty situation of South Africa, from the viewpoint of the South African Coalition, can be attained from the Coalition homepage (South African BIG Coalition 2003b).

²³ For a more detailed overview of the two BIG Coalitions, please refer to the South African Basic Income Grant Coalition homepage at <<http://www.big.org.za>> and the Namibian Basic Income Grant Coalition homepage at <<http://www.bignam.org>>.

²⁴ 100N\$ is approximately equivalent of 10€

²⁵ For different definitions of basic income see for example Stuart White (1997), Philippe Van Parijs (2002) And Guy Standing & Michael Samson (2003). Although these definitions do differ slightly, it is suggested that only these suggestions only emphasize certain aspects, while the essential parts do remain the same.

²⁶ It was interesting to note how the term "poor" gained positive tone within the context of Omitara pilot project. The BIG Coalition was outraged by the claim of Rigmar Osterkamp, whose calculations showed, that the inhabitants of Omitara were not poor by certain standards. Although the BIG Coalition argued for the universal grant in order to avoid stigmatization, they certainly did not hesitate to point out who are the poor people in the Namibian society.

²⁷ Although the Resource Book does not specifically define the word "capability" in this context, it is assumed, that the term refers to Amartya Sen's Capability approach, see for example Sen's discussion on "Poverty as Capability Deprivation" (Sen 1999: 87).

²⁸ Note that this approximation of the population size in Namibia differs from the earlier table presented in the beginning of the thesis. This is due to the varying estimations depending on the specific year.

²⁹ Looking at the titles of the representatives of the BIG Coalition consistently would be an interesting part of a research. As Zephaniah Kameeta is both a Bishop and a Doctor, and Dirk and Claudia Haarmann are both Reverends and Doctors, the titles vary. In a "research paper" as above, Dirk and Claudia Haarmann are not Reverends; the reference to churches is therefore ignored. Bishop Kameeta, an "influential church leader," however is mentioned by his doctorate title in this context as well. This can be a way to stress the academic nature of the paper.

³⁰ This newspaper article discussed the general living conditions of Omitara and the prospects of the BIG project.

³¹ Republikein – daily Afrikaans newspaper is also published in Namibia. However, the archives of this paper are not included in this research.

³² Shebeen is a small informal shop selling groceries and serving alcohol. For many, it is a place for social gathering.

Chapter 6

³³ Poverty in Namibia is officially calculated by using Cost of Basic Needs (CBN) approach. “Under this approach the poverty line is set by first computing the cost of a food basket enabling households to meet a minimum nutritional requirement and then an allowance for the consumption of basic non-food items is added. Households with consumption expenditure in excess of this threshold are considered non-poor and households with expenditure less than the threshold are considered poor” (CBS 2008: 2).

³⁴ The highlighted parts of BIG Coalition’s response would offer various possibilities for further analysis. The claims of “ideologically driven propaganda” and neoliberalism together with claims of being “extremely biased favouring the rich and powerful while trampling on the poor” and aligning “with some conservative white farmers, [and] certain elements in the German Embassy” indicate the fuelling of the discussion concerning racism and poverty in Namibia. These arguments are extreme in the context of an ex-colony of Germany, and in the Apartheid history of southern Africa. The way of discrediting an “opponent” in this way is certainly not unique to the country, but it is still exceptional in the context of policy proposals and development projects. Discrediting the opponent on academic terms by claiming that the researchers of NEPRU have had to “force themselves onto the debate and thereby secure financial resources for future work” is another interesting way to handle criticism.

³⁵ I never found out why the BIG project was not a “short-term gesture”. The official claim was that the government would take over the project after the two year pilot, but the probable situation, where the BIG proposal did not gain enough support, was not officially discussed.

³⁶ It should be pointed out that this is certainly not a unique characteristic of these two development projects.

Chapter 8

³⁷ The homepage of Dirk and Claudia Haarmann states that “Since April 2010, we are in the process of building up the The Theological Institute for Advocacy and Research in Africa (TARA), together with Bishop Dr. Z. Kameeta as patron and as an initiative of the Lutheran Communion in Southern Africa (LUCSA), supported by the Evangelical Lutheran Mission in Lower Saxony (ELM) and the Church Development Service/Germany (EED). TARA aims at empowering churches in Africa to acquire the necessary skills to act prophetically and professionally in their context, taking ownership of local social development agendas. The intention is three-fold: Firstly, to train and build capacity locally in Africa and to network among the churches. Secondly, to provide expertise to assist and professionally support research, analysis and advocacy work amongst local churches, thus fostering expertise in social development and concrete involvement of churches in the development of the African continent. Thirdly, to render sound information and regional strategic positions on development in a globalized world.” (Haarmann & Haarmann 2010) For now, it seems that the basic income proposal is history for Dirk and Claudia Haarmann.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

Platform of the BIG Coalition

Poverty and inequality pose the greatest threat to the success of South Africa's young democracy. A bold initiative is urgently needed to confront this challenge.

We, the undersigned organisations, call for the introduction of a universal Basic Income Grant as a key intervention to combat poverty and to improve the lives of the majority of South Africans.

At least 22 million people in South Africa--well over half the population--live in poverty. On average, they survive on R144 per person per month. A Basic Income Grant would provide rapid and sustained relief to all South Africans by:

- providing everyone with a minimum level of income,
- enabling the nation's poorest households to better meet their basic needs,
- stimulating equitable economic development,
- promoting family and community stability, and
- affirming and supporting the inherent dignity of all.

The Basic Income Grant should be founded on the following fundamental principles:

- **Universal Coverage:** It should be available to everyone, from cradle to grave, and should not be subject to a means test.
- **Relationship to existing grants:** It should expand the social security net. No individual should receive less in social and assistance grants than before the introduction of the Basic Income Grant.
- **Amount:** The grant should be no less than R100 per person per month on introduction and should be inflation indexed.
- **Delivery Mechanisms:** Payments should be facilitated through Public Institutions. Using community Post Banks would have the additional benefit of enhancing community access to much-needed banking services.
- **Financing:** A substantial portion of the cost of the grant should be recovered progressively through the tax system. This would demonstrate *solidarity* by all South Africans in efforts to eliminate poverty. The remaining cost should be borne by the fiscus. A range of new measures should be introduced to increase revenue so that the additional cost can be accommodated without squeezing out other social expenditure.

In recent weeks, the following organisations have come together to endorse this basic platform and to commit ourselves to working with government to make the Basic Income Grant a reality. We call on all South Africans to join us in this campaign and invite them to add their endorsement to this platform.

Charter Members

Alliance for Children's Entitlement to Social Security (ACCESS)

Black Sash

Child Health Policy Institute

Congress of South African Trade Unions

Development Resources Centre

Ecumenical Service for Socio-Economic Transformation

Gender Advocacy Programme

Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape

South African Council of Churches

South African National NGO Coalition

Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference

Treatment Action Campaign

3 July 2001

Appendix 2

Platform - BIG Coalition



We the undersigned organisations have resolved the following:

1.

We note that Namibia has extremely high levels of poverty and the highest incidence of income inequality in the world. The reduction of inequality and of poverty needs to be addressed as a top priority because social justice is a prerequisite for economic growth and investment in Namibia.

2.

We note that poverty is a contributing factor to the spread of HIV/AIDS and is thereby undermining economic security, and, at the same time exacerbating poverty. Consequently that means we need to address poverty and HIV/AIDS together.

3.

We resolve that the Basic Income Grant is a necessity to reduce poverty and to promote economic empowerment, freeing the productive potential of the people currently trapped in the vicious and deadly cycle of poverty.

Therefore:

1.

We agree that every Namibian should receive a Basic Income Grant until she or he becomes eligible for a government pension at 60 years.

2.

The level of the Basic Income Grant should be not less than N\$ 100 per person per month.

3.

The Basic Income Grant should be an unconditional grant to every Namibian.

4.

The costs for the Basic Income Grant should be recovered through a combination of progressively designed tax reforms.

We the undersigned organisations committed ourselves to working together with all stakeholders to make the Basic Income Grant a reality in Namibia. We invite and call upon all stakeholders to join our effort and to become a member of this coalition.

Umbrella organisations:

1.

Council of Churches in Namibia (CCN),

2.

National Union of Namibian Workers (NUNW)

3.

Namibian NGO Forum (NANGOF)

4.



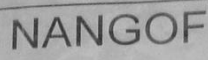

Namibia Network of AIDS Service Organisations (NANASO)

Individual organisations:

Legal Assistance Centre (LAC); Labour Resource and Research Institute (LaRRI)

Searched 12 April 2010

Appendix 3

NANGOF

Namibia NGO Forum

Basic Income Grant Coalition

Secretariat: c/o Desk for Social Development (ELCRN) - P.O. Box 5069 Windhoek - ☎ +264 (61) 235466 - ☎ +264 (61) 235499 - E-mail: cd.haarmann@gmx.net

Proof of Registration

Reg. Officer No.: 22 Household No.: Form No.: 01 of total 01

Personal Code	Name of recipient	Birth date	ID / BC = Birth Certificate / BCA = Baptismal Card / IDA = ID Application / VA = Voters Application
01		7	10-
02		8	10-
03		7	10-
04		7	10-
05		9	BC-
06		9	
07		9	BC-
08		9	BC-
09		9	BC-
10		8	BC-

Disjoint

Mother / person collecting grant on behalf of child(ren) (below 21 years):

Personal Code	Name of Mother / person collecting grant on behalf of child(ren)	Birth date	ID / BC = Birth Certificate / BCA = Baptismal Card / IDA = ID Application / VA = Voters Application	Receiving on behalf of PCode of children (<21)
01			10-	07, 09, 10
04			10-	05, 06, 08

I, hereby declare that the above provided information is true, and that all above-mentioned people live in this household. If any of the above dies during the duration of the BIG Pilot Project, the household undertakes to inform the BIG Coalition accordingly. This household is willing to part take in the BIG Pilot Project including to give the required information for the BIG Pilot Project Research. The BIG Coalition is not to be held liable for any financial loss or damage occurred.

Total No of recipients in Household: 10

Signature Head of Household: _____

Signature registering person: Ah

Date: 31-07-2007